

HOME NEWS

Usual for police to take pickaxe handles on jobs, Peach jury told

By Nicholas Timmins

The jury, at the resumed inquest into the death of Blair Peach, were shown yesterday more than 20 weapons, including crowbars and truncheons, taken from police lockers, after Mr Peach, a New Zealand schoolteacher, of Lavender Grove, Hackney, London, died at the demonstration against the National Front, at Southall last April.

The jury, sitting at Hammersmith, also saw picket cranes full of bottles and bricks and other debris, including two lengths of pipe, that the police removed from the scene of the demonstration.

Inspector Douglas Hopkins of the No 3 unit of the special patrol group, said that when he was serving in the East End the police often took pickaxe handles and similar objects, although they were not regulation issue when they were lying in wait for burglars. They also took jemmys and sledgehammers, when executing search warrants, although those were also not issued.

When shown a small spring-handled, lead-weighted crane, found in the locker of a patrol group officer, Mr Hopkins said: "I have never seen any constable arm himself with anything like that."

Asked by Mr Stephen Sedley, for the Peach family, if it was the case that the blow that killed Blair Peach could not have come from a police truncheon, Mr Hopkins said: "There is no way it could have been a policeman who wielded the blow."

With senior officers about, the public and television cameras around, and police having their numbers on their shoulders, no officer would have anything with him, other than a police truncheon, he added. It was a ridiculous suggestion.

"The things found in lockers are more likely to be memorabilia," he continued. No police officer would be justified in carrying such a weapon to a demonstration, nor would they, and to use it would be an unlawful act. It would be a very silly man who carried such a weapon with senior officers about.

Mr Hopkins, who directed the police charge into Beechcroft Avenue, where Mr Peach died, said he regrette that had happened. But faced with the same situation, where there were dangers of a large confrontation

developing, he would do the same again.

The object of the charge, with truncheons drawn, was to disperse the crowd and arrest those throwing stones and bricks, he said. "It was my action as the senior police officer that took people down there. I did my duty as I saw fit."

"I am sorry for Mr Peach and for the bad publicity it has brought to the SPG, and sorry for the effects it has had on some of my colleagues' individual careers, but if I was in the same circumstances, I would have done exactly the same thing again."

It was the special patrol group's job to stop flashpoints at demonstrations escalating.

The situation at the top of Beechcroft Avenue, with 100 to 150 people lined, one or three deep, was in the entrance, was "horrible," he said.

Bricks were being thrown, an officer was knocked unconscious with a triple fracture of his jaw by a brick to his face, and the police were greatly outnumbered. If it had gone wrong there would have been serious trouble.

The jury also saw a club-like wooden truncheon, more than two feet long, taken from Mr Hopkins' locker. It had been passed to his grandfather.

Mr Hopkins said that when he had been in charge of the crime squad in the East End he had carried it with him on two or three occasions where it was likely that the criminal would be armed with pickaxes and the like.

The police truncheon is quite a clumsy thing and it was quite common for officers to use things such as pickaxe handles," he said.

As a result of this case, they probably will not be in the future."

He agreed with Mr Sedley in his reasoning: an arrest or defending himself, a policeman did not have the right to use such force as to smash someone's skull.

Apart from nine police issue truncheons, the jury were shown an American beat truncheon, a rhino whip, four crowbars, a sledgehammer, a sledgehammer handle, a whip handle, a long brass baton handle, two knives and another non-police truncheon.

Seven of the items were taken from the locker of one officer who had driven a special patrol group van.

Mr Kenneth More

Actor to pay £200 libel damages

Mr Kenneth More, the actor, was ordered in the High Court yesterday to pay £200 libel damages to Major Danny Angel, a film producer. Mr More said later that he thought the sum would have been thousands.

But because Major Angel, who produced one of Mr More's most memorable films, *Reach for the Sky*, had earlier refused a larger sum in settlement he must pay the costs of the five-day case, estimated at £20,000.

Major Angel, who lives in France, had complained that Mr More libelled him in his autobiography *More or Less*.

Mr More, aged 62, who announced he was in the witness-box during the hearing that he has retired, was in court yesterday with his wife, Angela Douglas, the actress.

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receive a case history, complete with a photo of the child

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I wish to be a sponsor. Please send me details of a child on your waiting list.

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Please send me general details about ActionAid.

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Please make cheques payable to ActionAid Appeal.

Name _____ (Block letters please)
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ACTIONAID IS THE SPONSORSHIP SCHEME OF ACTION IN DISTRESS WHICH SINCE 1972 HAS BEEN FINDING SPONSORS FOR NEEDY CHILDREN IN COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD AND ASSISTING VILLAGES AND COMMUNITIES IN THEIR STRUGGLE FOR SELF-RELIANCE. HON. TREASURER THE RT HON. CHRISTOPHER CHATAWAY.

Congress finds Catholicism with a fresh and friendly face

From Clifford Longley
Liverpool

With a sense of surprised delight at finding a fresh and friendly image for themselves and their church, 2,000 delegates to the Roman Catholic National Pastoral Congress returned to their parishes from Liverpool yesterday with the common feeling that things could never be the same.

Hundreds of meetings and tens of thousands of words were condensed to one long weekend, such as most of the delegates had lived through before. Seven long final statements emerged yesterday, an historic moment in the lives of those taking part, for they represented the first real synthesis of view of the church.

The congress was looking for change, or "development" as it was more circumspectly called, such as the ordination of women; the ordination of married men; the admission of divorced and remarried Roman Catholics to Holy Communion; the reception by non-Roman Catholic Christians of Holy Communion in Catholic churches; the equality of communion under "both kinds"; wise as well as broad; and the greater use of services of general absolution.

At the Philharmonic Hall in

for their unhappiness, such as divorce. Roman Catholics deprived of the sacraments.

Contraception, the sticky issue, was by no means the only item where the congress had written a respectful but firm question mark against official teaching or practice.

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last word split it, unless it be with the Pope himself a certain issues that takes a full part in this discussions and it will not be easy for them to repudiate a single communiqué of the congress' final statements.

One of the more obvious fruits of the assembly in Liverpool is this new intimacy between bishops and lay people.

Cardinal Ruffle, who was present almost everywhere as the star of the show presented a statement of commitment that the church had discovered for itself, and for him, the one standing synthesis of the day.

In his sermon, the metropolitan cardinal spoke of the importance of the conviction that the Holy spirit had been active throughout the congress; a belief expressed the previous day by the Rev. Harold Morton, former general secretary of the British Council of Churches, and a Methodist.

It was a Roman Catholic laity unleashed in that extraordinary setting, proved themselves competent, articulate, dedicated and mature; and one bishop was not alone in saying he had not before appreciated the quality of the flock he shepherded.

The bishops with whom the consequences of the almost inevitable

ecumenical dimension both by the representation of other churches and by the discussion of the topic itself, must be an early indication by the Roman Catholic church to join the British Council of Churches, reversing an earlier decision to remain on one side.

At a press conference later Cardinal Hume responded cautiously to the suggestion that the congress was not in step with official policy on certain matters, and said that the main need expressed had been for further examination of those principles and policies which had been criticized.

The Archbishop of Liverpool, the most rev. Derek Worlock, whose personal triumph the congress was, commented on the possibility of a visit to Britain by Pope John Paul II.

In July the bishops are to meet to consider the congress, and it seems likely that they may want a kind of permanent national structure through which the new spirit of cooperation with the laity could be perpetuated.

NGA to decide next step in print dispute

By Donald Macintyre
Labour Reporter

Leaders of the National Graphical Association (NGA) will today consider their next step in the five-week-old dispute which has halted most provincial newspapers and disrupted the general printing industry.

The dispute remained deadlocked yesterday with the British Printing Industries Federation (BPIF) saying that about 15,000 of the 50,000 NGA members employed by federation firms had been locked out in accordance with the federation's advice.

Any possibility of further talks involving the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service will wait at least until today's session of the NGA's national council.

Six national newspapers have also been halted for one day because of lightning stoppages by Fleet Street NGA members in support of their provincial colleagues.

There remained yesterday a wide margin between the claims and counterclaims about the number of firms which had settled at or near the NGA's terms.

The BPIF said the number of federated firms that they

had reached a settlement remained at 120. All had been suspended from membership of the federation.

NGA sources, however, were adamant that as many as five times that figure of federated firms had settled out of a total of 2,200.

Threats alleged: Mr Leslie Stoddart, managing director of the Express and Star, Wolverhampton, which has been involved for the past week in the print dispute with the NGA, claimed yesterday that members of his staff who had continued to work normally had been threatened with violence (our Wolverhampton Correspondent).

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Journalist pickets: Printers were joined on the picket line by 25 journalists at Cumbrian Newspapers building, Carlisle, yesterday after being locked out in accordance with the federation's advice.

Union defied: Journalists on the Shropshire Star last night rejected an NGU instruction not to cooperate in the production of the paper during the dispute (Our Shropshire Correspondent).

Mr Evans: Mr Leslie Stoddart, managing director of the Express and Star, Wolverhampton, claimed yesterday that members of his staff who had continued to work normally had been threatened with violence (our Wolverhampton Correspondent).

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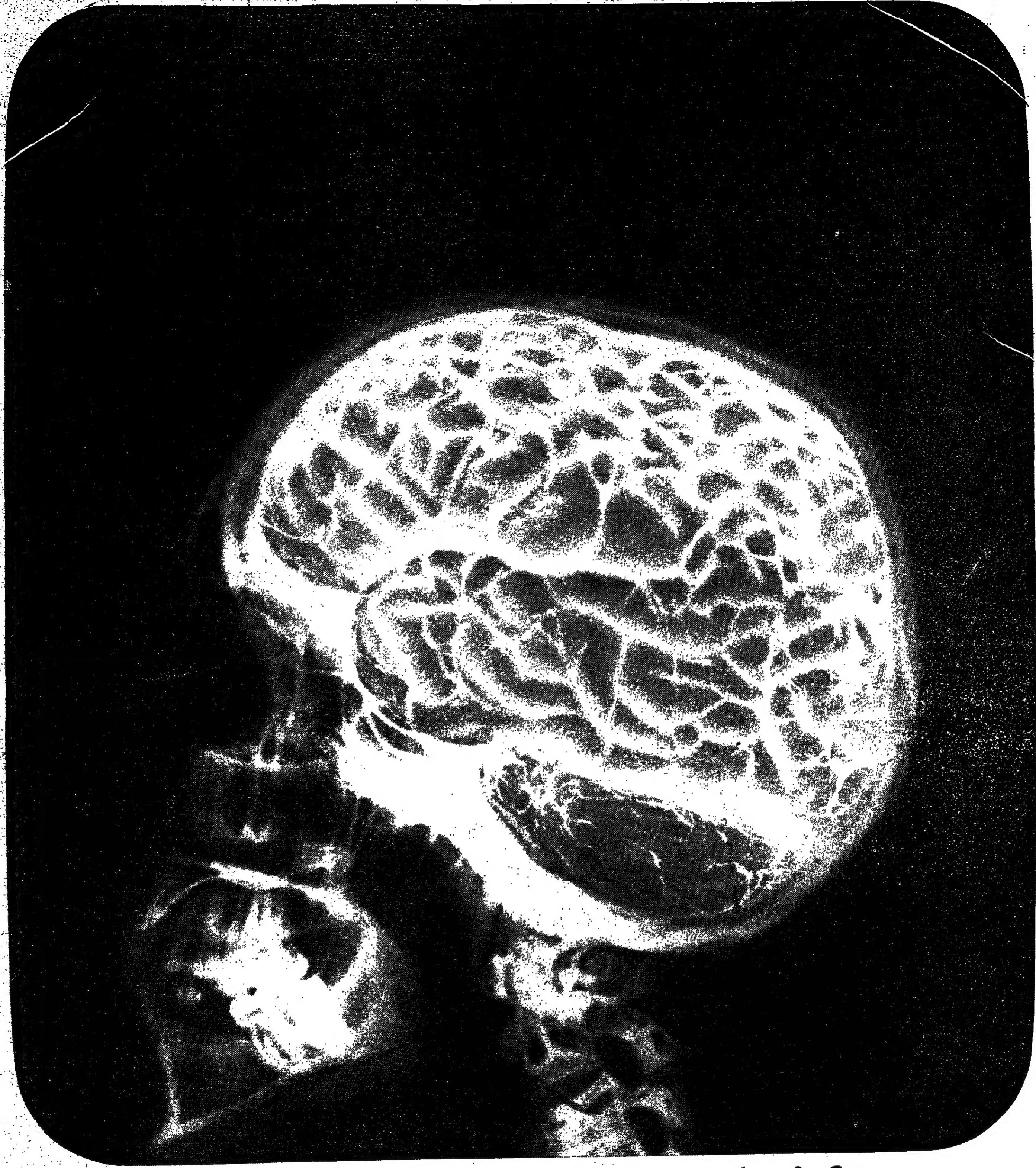
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Inside your head is a substance that's far more valuable than North Sea Oil.

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HOME NEWS

Tameside can abolish grammar schools but ILEA move fails

By Diana Giddens
Education Correspondent

The Government has decided to allow Tameside to abolish its five remaining grammar schools, but to refuse the Inner London Education Authority permission to close or amalgamate Highbury Grove comprehensive school in Islington.

The decision, which was forecast in *The Times* on April 18, is in line with the expressed determination of Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education and Science, to follow, where possible, local parental wishes. He has always insisted that the Conservatives are neither pro-selection nor anti-comprehensive as such.

In Tameside, Mr Carlisle's approval of the Labour-controlled council's plans for five grammar schools and 13 secondary modern schools to become 16 comprehensive schools for 11 to 16-year-olds and two sixth-form colleges, brings to an end a saga which began 15 years ago.

Plans for ending selection in Tameside schools were first put forward in 1965 and resubmitted in a revised form by the new Labour council after local government reorganisation in 1974. All schools were due to go comprehensive in 1976 but the Conservatives threw out the plans when they came to power in May 1976.

An attempt by the Labour government of the day to force Tameside to go ahead with comprehensive reorganisation was ruled unlawful by the House of Lords in August 1976. When Labour returned to power in Tameside last May they immediately resubmitted plans for abolishing all selection by next September.

In the local government elections last week Labour increased its majority on the council from 18 to 35. Councillor Roy Oldham, leader of the council, said yesterday that he was delighted that the years of uncertainty had been brought to an end.

Anger over closure of quango

By Our Education Correspondent

The Government's decision to close the Centre for Information and Advice on Educational Disadvantage has provoked a furious response from Mr Max Morris, chairman of the centre's governing body.

Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education and Science, first announced the Government's intention to close the centre in November last year. Continued grant aid from the Government to the centre, a "quango", which this year amounts to £312,000, would not provide value for money he said.

He agreed to reconsider his decision, however, after vociferous protests from Mr Morris and others. But Mr Morris said yesterday that the reconsideration had been "entirely spurious".

"An institution devoted to helping disadvantaged children has been deliberately and cruelly murdered by a callous and cynical government department."

Announcing his decision in a Commons written reply yesterday, Mr Carlisle said he had given careful consideration to the representations he had received from the centre's governors and others. Examinations are threatened. Urgent action is needed to safeguard school examinations on the TUC's day of action on May 14. Mr David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said yesterday (the Press Association reports).

Teachers strike at 24 schools

Nearly 8,000 Nottinghamshire schoolchildren missed lessons yesterday as 240 teachers from 24 schools went on strike in the continuing dispute over class sizes. The teachers will return to work Friday.

Last week more than 1,300 children were sent home after 44 teachers were suspended for refusing to take classes of more than 30.

Man alleges police assault

Mr Francis Dalzell told Liverpool County Court yesterday that he could hardly walk after being beaten by police when he would not admit to an offence.

He was thrown into a cell, stripped to his underpants and punched and kicked until he confessed, he said. Mr Dalzell, aged 28, of Lawrence Road, Tue Brook, Liverpool, is claiming damages for injuries he received at Heaton Road police station in July, 1978.

Mr Michael Middleton, its director, said that contrary to widespread belief the trust received no government assistance. It was an independent charity founded by a group of public spirited companies and had been maintained entirely by voluntary contributions during

the 23 years of its existence. The number of subscribers and the size of their contributions had grown steadily, but they had not kept pace with inflation. The trust was carrying out greatly expanded duties with appreciably less purchasing power than at the time of its foundation in 1957, Mr Middleton said.

"We have no empire-building aims. But there are a lot more things we would like to do, and inflation is crippling us." There appears to be no shortage of support. Already 20 of

Minister's refusal to allow extra recruitment this session 'a mistake,' du Cann letter says

Ban on new Commons subcommittees angers Tory MP

By Peter Hennessy

The power of the 14 new House of Commons select committees to establish subcommittees serviced by extra support staff has become the subject of a private and outspoken correspondence between Mr Edward du Cann, Conservative MP for Taunton and chairman of the Liaison Committee, representing all select committee chairmen, and Mr Norman St John-Stevens, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Leader of the House.

Mr St John-Stevens has refused to allow the creation of new subcommittees or the recruitment of additional staff for them during the present session of Parliament and has suggested to Mr du Cann that the

matter might be looked at in the next session. Mr du Cann is deeply dissatisfied with Mr St John-Stevens' response and says in a letter of reply, dated April 17: "I think it is a mistake not to allow those select committees which wish to establish subcommittees to do so. In my private opinion it is probable rather than possible that the committees concerned will table motions which the House will pass. I would recommend to you that, and so I am sure would every member of the Liaison Committee, I think the proposals I put to you in my letter were eminently reasonable and modest, and shall briefly look at the matter again."

The stimulus for the exchange of letters was the desire of the Scottish affairs, Welsh affairs and defence committees to establish subcommittees. At present the only three committees which have such a right are Treasury and Civil Service, chaired by Mr du Cann, home affairs, and foreign and commonwealth.

The Liaison Committee supported the wish of the Scottish and Welsh committees to have two subcommittees, only one of which would be active at any one time. The committee also approved a request from Sir David Langford-Hall, Conservative MP for Shrewsbury and chairman of the defence committee, for a subcommittee and adequate support staff to service it.

Mr du Cann wrote to Mr St John-Stevens accordingly on

March 6 and April 1. In his reply, dated April 15, Mr St John-Stevens said: "I fully recognise the problems that are posed for all these committees, particularly perhaps that on Scottish affairs by their wide ranging responsibilities. My concern, however, is on consideration, is that, bearing in mind the procedure committee's recommendations regarding the establishment of further permanent subcommittees at this stage, it would be advisable for the House to let the work of these select committees stand for the time being, and to reconsider the overall position, and the possible need for further subcommittees, next session."

As you will appreciate, it is necessary to take into account not only the cost of establishing new subcommittees, but also the potential effect on

departments of their establishment. I believe we should be in a better position next session to judge in the light of experience how the present structure is developing, and whether it might be revised, or expanded, without placing unreasonable burdens on already heavily stretched departments."

In response to the 1978 report of the Select Committee on Procedure, the Government last autumn established 12 new select committees to monitor the work of Whitehall departments and two committees for Scotland and Wales. The liaison committee is the negotiating body for the committees with the Government and the House of Commons Commission which dispenses money for staff support and travel.

Around the world in 21 days at 30,000 ft

By Frances Gibb

The first attempt to fly non-stop around the world in a hot-air balloon, taking not 80 but 21 days, is to be made this autumn by a British team of four.

They will attempt a trip of 20,000 nautical miles, more than seven times longer than the record of 2,700 nautical miles set when two Americans beat the British in crossing the Atlantic in a hot-air balloon in 1978.

Mr Donald Cameron, one of the two who attempted the Atlantic crossing and one of the designers of the balloon to be used this time, will be one of those trying a new kind of ballooning at high altitudes. He and his colleagues will live in a self-contained pressurized capsule, or gondola, 15ft by 9ft, with an oxygen supply which will enable them to travel at between 30,000 and 55,000ft.

"What it means is that instead of drifting with the weather system, we can go above it and gain speed," said Mr Cameron. "More than a thousand lives are at risk in London each year because of an acute shortage of ambulances, according to a report published yesterday."

The

London Ambulance Service is 500 below its establishment strength of 2,400. It should answer 50 per cent of calls within seven minutes and 55 per cent within 14 minutes, but because of staff shortages, only 32 per cent are answered in seven minutes.

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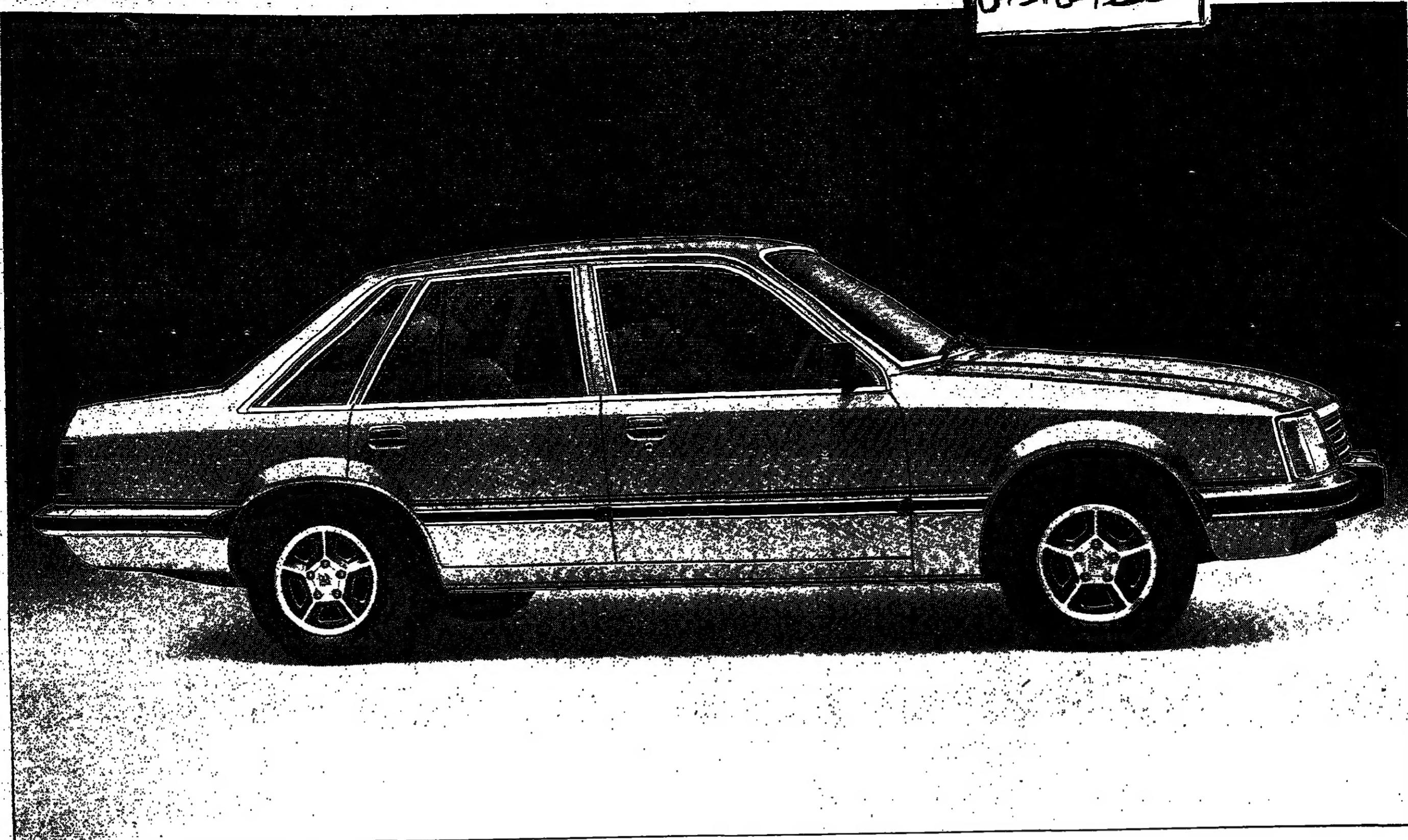
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Have you noticed how luxury, like beauty, is often only skin deep?

If you're easily seduced by thick carpets and comfy seats, there are any number of 'luxury' cars to choose from.

If, however, you believe there's more to luxury than meets the eye (or for that matter, the posterior), the list of candidates rapidly shrinks.

Two cars that bear closer scrutiny are the Vauxhall Royale Saloon and Royale Coupé. Their distinctive looks owe as much to the science of the wind tunnel as to the art of the designer.

Both cut through the air with the minimum of turbulence and, as a result, with minimal wind noise.

A tapered, sloping bonnet and, below the bumper, an air dam reduce aerodynamic lift at speed and underline

the cars' remarkable stability and impressive roadholding.

Even the door mirrors are specially contoured to deflect spray and dirt away from the side windows.

Road noise, too, is suppressed not just by layers of insulation, but by the suspension itself.

Springs and shock absorbers, for example, have been

mounted closer to the wheels than is customary. The engine, a silky 2.8 litre 140 bhp six-cylinder unit, is additionally steadied by two diagonally positioned hydraulic dampers for further smoothness.

And automatic transmission is, of course, standard on both cars (with manual available at no additional cost).

Inside, the Royale is one of the few cars that allows the driver to achieve not just a good driving position, but the ideal one.

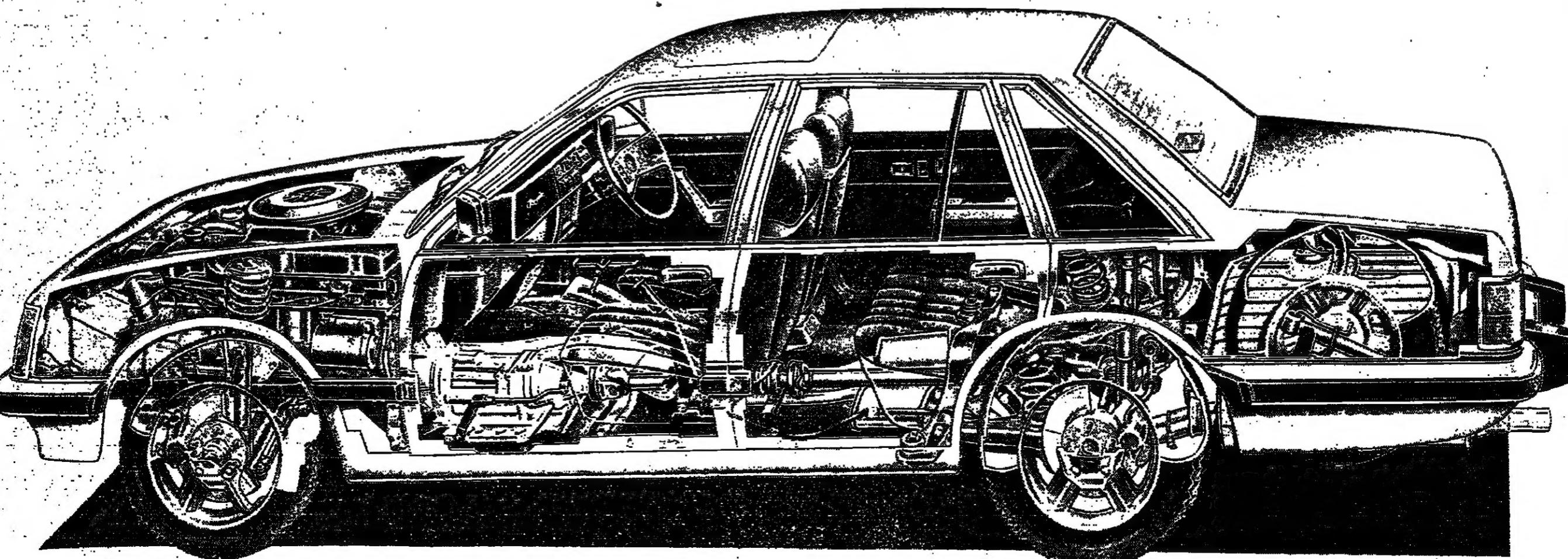
You can adjust the driver's seat for height, as well as for reach and rake and the steering wheel is tiltable.

As you'd also expect, the steering is powered.

Examine a Royale at your nearest Vauxhall dealer, and don't simply be seduced by the lavish specification.

You'll find it's one of the few cars where luxury is more than just a question of appearances.

AIR CONDITIONING IS THE ONLY OPTIONAL EXTRA AT £225. SALOON £10.100, COUPÉ £10.547. PRICES, CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS, INCLUDE CAR TAX AND VAT. DELIVERY AND NUMBER PLATES EXTRA.



VAUXHALL
GM
ROYALE

EMBASSY SIEGE

Twenty soldiers freed
captives in raid
on Iranian EmbassyBy Stewart Tendler,
David Nicholson-Lord
and John Witherow

Twenty members of the Special Air Service Regiment took part in the storming of the Iranian Embassy in London, it was revealed yesterday. At the time of the attack, codenamed operation Nimrod, the police thought they faced five gunmen but detectives now believe there may have been six or more.

Four gunmen are known for certain to have died in the attack, including one who was dead on arrival at hospital. Another was captured outside the embassy but at least two bodies lie in the wreckage of the embassy.

One of the bodies is thought to be that of one of the two hostages killed by the gunmen, who were frustrated by their negotiations with the police. The other is thought to be the body of a sixth terrorist.

The SAS men, commanded by a colonel, broke into the embassy at 16 Princes Gate, Kensington by scaling iron ropes from the roof and blowing a hole in the wall of the building next door. Using grenades to stun and surprise the gunmen, the soldiers escaped with injuries to three of their team.

Nineteen hostages were helped out of the building and yesterday three were still in hospital recovering from injuries. Two of those had emergency operations.

The other freed hostages were taken to the Metropolitan Police training centre at Hendon, north London, where they were reunited with their families as detectives began to question them.

Police constable Trevor Lock, who was on probation as an embassy guard when the gunmen struck last Wednesday, was allowed to go home and prepare for a holiday after being publicly praised by Sir David McNee, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

It is believed that when the SAS men reached the embassy PC Lock overcame one of the gunmen and saved a soldier's life. Throughout the six days of the siege he was an important link between the Iranian terrorists and the team of six police negotiators working outside.

At the embassy men from Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist squad and forensic experts were waiting yesterday to begin sifting through the tons of debris. In the course of the attack the building caught fire and that is now attributed to material the gunmen had left lying in the embassy.

Yesterday Commander Peter Duffy, head of the anti-terrorist squad, said that apart from the two bodies known to be in the building it was possible that others would be found during the search.

Because the hostages were split up into groups around the embassy during the siege, no one had been able to give a definitive account of the number of hostages or their captors. All that is known is that five hostages were freed during the siege, two were executed and 19 freed after the building was stormed.

In the aftermath of Monday's dramatic events the police were able to give a picture of how the mood inside the embassy began to change on Monday to precipitate the rescue operation.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Dellow, the man in charge of the police operation, said yesterday: "We tried to continue with the strategy I employed throughout of negotiating, and negotiating is largely a matter of trying to

get something out of someone."

To the outside world the negotiations between the police and the gunmen who spoke English was on first name terms with the policemen on the other end of the field telephone being used. But a crucial point was approaching.

The gunmen had dropped their demands for the release of 91 prisoners held in Iran. At the beginning of the siege the gunmen announced they belonged to "the Group of the Martyr" which represented a movement for autonomy in the Iranian province of Ardebilan.

But Mr Dellow said, "we realized we were near the end of what could be reasonably offered, knowing the Government's attitude towards terrorism."

The police appear to have been approaching the point when they had to persuade the gunmen that they would not be flown out of Britain and should surrender. Mr Dellow said the gunmen were told what would happen if they surrendered.

The gunmen went back to their threats to harm the hostages. At 12.55 pm shots were heard. The police did not know whether the gunmen were bluffing, but by 1.30 pm the gunmen claimed a man had been shot.

At 7 pm approached the conversations on the field telephone are thought to have included a 10-minute deadline from the gunmen. Then there were more shots and just before 7 pm a body was seen outside the embassy.

Mr Dellow said: "Knowing someone had been killed, things had to change." He expected that a second hostage had died, the police could not rule out more killings. The gunmen were talking about one execution every half-hour.

It took ten minutes to prepare the SAS to storm the embassy. Yesterday Mr Dellow said: "I have no regrets about the operation at all."

The hostages were:

Yahid Khan, Iranian student; Mohammed Mohsen, accountant; Iranian student; Abolghassem Jasherei-Najehdini; Ali Asghar Tabatabai, bank employee; Ali Asghar Tabatabai, bank employee; Hossein Mousavi, Iranian student; Farid, magazine editor; Mohammad Mehdi, magazine editor; Zahra Zamani, close friend of the Iranian ambassador; Dr Aviel Farb, Israeli Cultural Attaché; Dr Ghulam Ali Afzal, Iranian; Mazlum, arms officer; Captain Ali Ramezani, Iranian; Kanti, secretary; Mr Ali Al-Suli, Chancery, journalist; police constable Trevor Lock.

Parliamentary report, page 16
Leading article, page 19



New man on the door: A policeman taking up his post yesterday at the Iranian Embassy in London.

West told
not to
compare two
issues

From Tony Allaway

Tehran, May 6

The West was warned today not to draw any comparisons between the quick end to the London embassy siege and the continued detention of 50 American hostages in Iran.

The state radio, after broadcasting official messages of thanks to the British Government, said in a special commentary that the difference between the two embassy attacks was "from the earth to the sky".

The commentary was a response to remarks the radio said were made by Mr Zbigniew Brzezinski, United States National Security Adviser, that Iran should learn from the London embassy siege. Fueling the widespread belief here that the Americans were behind the London drama, the commentary accused Mr Brzezinski of drawing an "irrelevant comparison".

The Tehran embassy occupation, the radio said, was an attack by an oppressed nation on "the centre of United States rule over Iran, destroying its last bastion of colonialism in Iran".

The commentary said that in London "a group of hired and deceived terrorists plotted against this 'very nation' the signs of provocation and plot by the United States in this affair is evident for everyone".

The Americans taken hostage in Iran had been unmasked as spies, while the Iranians working in the London embassy had "no other duties than representing their country".

President Abolhassan Banisadr, with uncharacteristic praise for what is widely regarded in Iran as another bastion of imperialism, thanked the British Prime Minister for the "steadfast action of the police of your country... who demonstrated their skill in confronting this act".

But in an earlier message to Iran, he emphasized Iran's refusal to negotiate with the London gunmen or meet their demands, making it clear that "the psychology of surrender is no longer the psychology of present-day Iranians".

An editorial in *Islamic Republic*, the newspaper of the powerful clergy-backed politicians, continued to allege that the London siege involved British connivance.

The British Embassy today reported receiving congratulations from a few Iranians.

A line of gravestones in a special plot at St Martin's Church, close to the camp, is further evidence that not all members of Britain's most



Men of the Special Air Service Regiment at their Hereford headquarters demonstrating the equipment they use. Faces are blanked out to preserve anonymity. Foreground: Freefall parachutists. Left to right: Explosive and demolition expert; frogman; mountaineer; long range desert group with adapted Land-Rover; SAS man with general equipment; sniper and machine gunner; medical orderly; skier; canoeists.

SAS rescuers celebrate a successful mission

By Henry Stanhope

Defence Correspondent

A party was held last night at Bradbury Lines, the Hereford headquarters of the 22nd Regiment of the Special Air Service (SAS) to celebrate the success of the rescue mission at the Iranian Embassy in Princes Gate, London, the night before.

All 20 of those who had set out on the hazardous operation had "beaten the clock": a very SAS term meaning that their names need not be inscribed on the clock tower memorial alongside the asphalt drill square.

An inscription on the clock tower reads: "We are the pilgrims, master: we shall go always a little further; it may be beyond that last blue mountainhardt with snow, across that angry or that glimmering sea".

A line of gravestones in a special plot at St Martin's Church, close to the camp, is further evidence that not all members of Britain's most

secretive regiment return as unscathed as those flown back from RAF Northolt yesterday.

For those who took part in operation Nimrod last night, the party was the climax to an exercise which began shortly after the terrorists bundled Police Constable Trevor Lock into the Iranian Embassy last Wednesday.

Contract with the police was established, a liaison team was despatched to London, and contingency planning and training started.

Planning for such an operation has been a regular feature of SAS training for several years. Men of the regiment, directed by a special counter-revolutionary warfare training cell at Hereford, have "rescued" hostages from trains, from aircraft and from besieged buildings in preparation for the day when their expertise would be needed.

It was only the detail that the men had to learn in preparation for the embassy raid which everyone hoped would never become necessary.

Some of that detail was provided by agents of the Security Service, otherwise known as MI5, who used "bugging" devices to monitor what was going on in the embassy, and who helped to build a scale model of the building.

The soldiers arrived at the scene some time before they were called to action. They donned their bobs in an empty, adjacent building before swarming over the roofs to be lowered by ropes to an upstairs window in the embassy.

They were armed with a mixture of weapons, but those who entered the embassy itself carried sub-machine guns and "stun" grenades. Those grenades are a British invention and were first used by West German police commandos in the raid on a hijacked airliner at Mogadishu in 1977. Two SAS men travelled to the airfield in Somalia to advise the West Germans on their use.

The grenades release a blinding flash and a deafening bang.

with the object of stunning both captors and captives for long enough to expedite entry to a confined space.

They also deter hostages from panicking and running. Three SAS men were hurt in the rescue, including one who had a flesh wound in the leg and another with a slightly burnt hand. All were released from hospital after treatment.

Although SAS men have been on alert during a number of similar terrorist incidents in recent years, including the Balcombe Street siege in 1975, and have given advice to foreign governments, the Bank Holiday raid was the first in which they have had to be called into action in a mainland terrorist attack.

It is highly probable that those involved will receive awards for bravery as a result of Monday's action. But there will be no citation, no newspaper headlines. To have "beaten the clock" is satisfactory enough for the men of Britain's most private army.

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The siege paralysed traffic in parts of central London and taxi-drivers and motorists were still feeling the effects yesterday.

The concentration of embassies in the area has upset

members of the South Kensington and Queen's Gate Residents' Association. Mrs Caryl Harris, its secretary, said that in the past two weeks local residents had been subjected to a murder of a Libyan and now an embassy siege.

It is not just that we have

84 embassies in the royal borough, but more to do with the particular embassies centred around our homes", she said.

"Embassies of countries with internal strife like the Iranian, Libyan, Yemenite, Saudi Arabian and Bangladeshi.

"Diplomatic immunity allows these embassies to store large and dangerous caches of explosives, and hold noisy and frequently hostile demonstrations."

Yesterday the Iraqi embassy in Queen's Gate, was guarded by 16 policemen at the front and back doors.

The area around Princes Gate is a strange mix of smart blocks of flats, students' rooms, schools, embassies and hotels. The clashing refrains of opera singers and instrumentalists from the Royal College of Music combine uneasily with the cosmopolitan noises outside.

Miss Sandra Potter, who lives and works in Princes Gate as a nursery assistant, said she did not feel it was a very safe place any longer.

"I am still shocked by the siege," she said.

Israelis have not forgotten the Arab attack on an El Al coach in London two years ago

Embassies supplement protection provided by Yard

By Stewart Tendler

The Israelis are not alone in supplementing the protection available from Scotland Yard's diplomatic protection group, which is now larger than the special patrol group.

The most sophisticated machinery probably exists at the United States Embassy in Grosvenor Square. After passing the police guard outside, the visitor is checked in a vestibule and must pass a metal detection test. No cameras are normally allowed past that point.

Inside the main reception hall a United States Marine is always on duty as security men watch visitors and a bank of television screens linked to cameras at the front and rear of the building.

No one goes past that point unless he is fetched by someone representing the diplomat or official he has gone to see.

The Russians, like the Israelis,

are within the safety of Kensington Palace Gardens. There is no doubt that there are a number of security men among the staff and diplomats, and their presence is linked as much to the issue of internal security as any external threat.

The same is probably true of other east European missions, but the Yugoslavs, wary of the militant Croats and Serbs at large in Europe, take elaborate precautions for their ambassador.

As the terrorist threat has grown in recent years, private security companies have capitalized on diplomatic anxiety.

Sometimes staffed by former members of the Special Air Service Regiment, the companies may provide guards, technical aids or simply advice.

There is a training routine in the SAS for protecting VIPs, which is known to be extremely thorough.

The police responsibility

fluctuates, influenced often by the changes within the internal politics of their charges. The Greeks, for example, may no longer be as vulnerable as they were at the time of the colonels' regime. But Turkey has many internal difficulties and terrorist gangs. The constitution and situation has changed sharply in Spain, and Italy is ravaged by all manner of political violence.

Even events such as the siege at the Iranian Embassy can cause adjustments. The Iraqi Embassy, a quarter of a mile away in Queen's Gate, has had a police guard since an abortive grenade attack on the ambassador's car in 1978.

That guard has become a line of police officers backed by reserves. Since the Iranians have blamed the Iraqis, among others, for the siege, the police are taking no chances.

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On the Libyan Embassy, we

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It is understood that Mr Rees does not have any new information regarding the Libyan affair.

Mr Rees also wanted the Home Office to look at the case with which Iranians came here to study at institutions which had sprung up round Britain. He contrasted it with the difficulties which face Asian and West Indian students.

Evidently alarmed that further Middle East terrorism may be attempted in London, Mr Rees asked: "What is going on in the Libyan Embassy? Are those working there officially accredited to this country?"

He said steps must be taken to deal with a threat by Colonel Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, to liquidate Libyan exiles here if they refused to return home.

Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, gave no specific answers except to observe:

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Mr Rees is known to be worried that any one of a number of groups could attempt to dramatize their cause by taking terrorist action in London. He feels that further tough government action is required and that expelling all at the Libyan

Embassy would be an effective step.

Another Commons motion

put down by Mr Edward Taylor, Conservative MP for Southend, East, expresses the hope that the shrewd manner in which members of the security services risked their lives

in securing the safe release of the London hostages will persuade the Iranian authorities to release the American hostages.</

OVERSEAS

South African black activist slips out of police control

From Ray Kennedy

Johannesburg, May 6
South African police have launched an urgent investigation into how one of the country's black activists has slipped out of their grasp into independent Lesotho.

Mr Theophile Botha, leader of the Port Elizabeth Civic Action Organisation (Pebo), had been sitting on pavements in the city, quietly selling fruit and vegetables, since February, when a five-year banning order was served on him.

At the weekend he left his pitch and, armed with the aid of his colleagues, crossed into Lesotho. Police said today they expected to make arrests.

Later last year Mr Botha began to emerge as a volatile Black Consciousness leader in Port Elizabeth, which is the centre for South Africa's motor industry.

At the Ford motor plant, where he was a trained draughtsman, Mr Botha led a walkout by black workers after whites complained that blacks were abusing integrated facilities and that they were untrustworthy, had no table manners and had adopted threatening attitudes towards white super-visors.

Ford, which claims to be in the forefront of progressive industrial relations in South Africa, suspended Mr Botha. Strikes by black workers spread to two other plants.

The strikes were resolved after two months of negotiations over blacks' demands. The blacks

claimed, for instance, that short-time working affected only them and that they were on the losing end when annual bonuses were calculated.

Meanwhile Mr Botha, as chairman of Pebo, was involved in objections by blacks to being moved from Walmer township, which is close to the centre of Port Elizabeth and therefore their jobs, to a new location 12 miles outside the town.

Early in January Mr Botha called for a city-wide strike against the relocation plan. Police arrested Mr Botha and two other Pebo officials. The police were then sent into the township and used tear gas to prevent threatened demonstrations against the arrests and the forced removal.

Mr Botha and his companions were held, without being charged, for seven weeks and on release, in February, they were served with five-year banning orders. A magistrate last month ordered Mr Botha's banning so that he could resume work at Ford.

Thus he had been squatting daily on the pavements in Zwide township, Port Elizabeth, in which he was restricted.

His escape to Lesotho probably means a resumption of his activist role. Tonight the police were taking a calm view of the situation. Colonel Gerrit Erasmus, the security police chief in Port Elizabeth said: "We will probably hear from him soon. He will probably phone us or his family."



Bodies sent home: Nine coffins containing the remains of American servicemen who died in the Iranian desert during last month's abortive attempt to rescue the embassy hostages in Tehran, left Zurich yesterday in an American military aircraft for Dover; (our German correspondent writes).

over to relatives. Only three coffins were laid in a line beside the aircraft and after reading a prayer and offering a benediction, Archbishop Capucci signed a document transferring them to the Red Cross. They were then taken to a hangar for transfer to American control.

Confusion persisted over the num-

ber of bodies. The United States has maintained—and said so again yesterday—that eight men died in the rescue mission and has named them, but the Iranian official who supervised the recovery of the bodies said originally that nine had been found. Last week Tehran radio said a tenth body was recovered.

S African students ready to end school boycott

From Nicholas Ashford

Cape Town, May 6

The three-week boycott of classes by coloured and Indian students appeared to be nearing an end today after a statement by the Committee of 61, a student organization which coordinated the boycott on the Cape peninsula, that they would return to classes, but "not to receive the old, inferior, racist education".

In Natal a meeting of Indian and Coloured high-school pupils also decided to call off their protest against inferior education. A final decision on a return will be taken by the committee on Saturday. Until then the body, which has been remarkably successful in winning the support of parents and teachers for the protesters, has advised students to implement the "alternative education programme" which was devised by students and teachers.

The move back to school came a day after Mr Piegter Botha, the Prime Minister, had employed an judicious mixture of carrot and stick in an attempt to persuade the protesters to call off the boycott. At a press conference yesterday, he told the students to go back to school, saying that no government could allow a country to be harmed by boycotts.

At the same time he accepted that Coloured students had "justifiable grievances" pledging to make his personal task to ensure that they were eradicated.

Mr Botha also said he was considering ordering an in-depth inquiry into the segregated-education back-

cation system "as a whole". The Government was prepared to accept a programme in which equality in education for all races could be attained as soon as possible within South Africa's economic means.

Coloured political leaders welcomed what they perceived to be the Prime Minister's conciliatory line, noting that Mr Botha had not resorted to force, as had his predecessor, Mr John Vorster, during the black student disturbances in 1976. The Rev Alan Hendrickse, leader of the Coloured Labour Party, said the Prime Minister deserved a chance to put his "new" system to the test.

But the student leaders made it clear that their intention to end the boycott was not in response to the Prime Minister's statement but because they felt it had achieved for them a number of important gains.

According to the statement by the Committee of 61, these included an "astounding degree of unity, solidarity and discipline" among the pupils involved in the boycott; approval of students to elect their own representatives at all schools and a "new relationship of support and identification" between parents, teachers and students.

Another contributory factor has undoubtedly been the fact that many students were beginning to tire of the boycott. Some had argued that the Committee of 61 should have called it off at the beginning of this week rather than take the risk that students would start

that students would start drifting back.

Nicaraguans worried by growth of hardline communism after anti-Somoza uprising

Sandinista revolution begins to pall in business community

From Stephen Downer

Managua, May 5

Thirty-eight weeks after the overthrow of President Anastasio Somoza, whose family dominated Nicaragua for four decades, the country's most powerful forces are deeply divided.

The Sandinista National Liberation Front, whose guerrillas led the anti-Somoza uprising, has failed to convince its allies in the business sector that it is not moving towards communism.

The Sandinistas claim that the revolution they inspired is unique and that they will not repeat the mistakes made by other countries.

However, private businessmen point to a series of recent events as indicating that the Sandinistas, whose ranks include large numbers of non-Marxists, are being dominated increasingly by hardline communists.

They cite the visit to Moscow early last month of Señor Tomás Borge, the Minister of

the Interior and one of the founders of the Sandinists front in 1961, and Señor Moisés Hassan, Sandinista member of the ruling Junta of Reconstruction. Both signed a document in Moscow which amounted to a declaration of support for the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Later in the month the composition of a 47-member Legislative Council was announced. Its make-up was negotiated between the Junta and the nine-man Sandinista directorate, and the Sandinistas dominate it. The Nicaraguan Democratic Movement, a political party supported by liberal businessmen, was given one seat.

Within the Señora Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, one of the three non-Sandinistas on the Junta, resigned because of "ill health". She is the widow of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro editor of the anti-Somoza newspaper *La Prensa*, who was murdered in an early-morning ambush in January, 1978.

Soon afterwards Señor Alfonsino Robelo, who formed the

cooking oil business explained later: "In the past we suffered from United States intervention, but what really seems sad to me is that a country destroyed by war, bankrupted by Somoza, should shake off the influence of United States imperialism only to fall under Soviet imperialism".

Señor Robelo had criticized the Sandinistas on several other occasions. When the country's programme to teach all Nicaraguans to read and write was introduced in late March, he gave a warning that it should not be used to indoctrinate children with communist ideology.

He said that the private sector was responsible for 60 per cent of last year's gross national product.

Señor Robelo, owner of a newspaper said that Señor Robelo's supporters "climbed on to the revolutionary ship like rats because Somoza rebuffed them".

Señor Enrique Dreyfus, president of the Nicaragua Development Institute, the principal private-sector organization, said in March, that he was worried about what was happening in Nicaragua.

"We (in the private sector) are worried because within the Government there is a large group of Marxist-Leninists. They undoubtedly want to take this revolution as far left as they can", he said.

He said that the Government had failed to make clear precisely what the private sector's role was to be. "The private sector that is here wants to stay, but who is going to risk money when you do not know where you are going?"

He said that the private sector was responsible for 60 per cent of last year's gross national product.

leading article in the newspaper said that Señor Robelo's supporters "climbed on to the revolutionary ship like rats because Somoza rebuffed them".

Mr Linowitz, said there was common ground between the Israeli and Egyptian proposals.

"They (the Israeli and

Egyptians) believe that

there is no question that there

is considerable common ground

and this has to be developed."

Mr Linowitz said the Egyptian plan had not been presented in a take-it-or-leave-it fashion. He said he had presented American ideas but did not say what these were.

Mr Linowitz said the Heraclion talks would wind up tomorrow, a day earlier than planned.

Under the original schedule,

the talks were due to transfer

after that to Alexandria.—

Reuter

Fifty-four hurt as strikers and police clash in Brazil

São Paulo, Brazil, May 6
Clashes throughout the day between police and anti-Government demonstrators who threw stones and lit fires in the streets here left 54 people injured and 22 under arrest, police and hospital officials said.

The violence yesterday in the São Paulo suburb of São Bernardo began on the thirty-fifth day of a metalworkers' strike outside a church where Señor Paulo Maluf, the State Governor, said: "This was an urban guerrilla action" while police blamed "outside agitators". Hospital officials said most of the people hurt in the clashes were treated and released, suffering from tear gas or smoke inhalation.

The violence threatened to become more chaotic today because

because 1,300 bus drivers voted to go on strike immediately.

Señor Roméo Tavares, head of São Paulo's police force, issued a communiqué which accused "radical groups interested in disturbing the peace".

Their aim, he said, was to "make innocent victims in order to traumatize the state and the nation".

Tension had been growing in São Bernardo area since tens of thousands of workers began their strike on April 1. Their leaders were arrested.

The violence yesterday began when demonstrators shouted insults against President João Figueiredo and against Señor Maluf. Metalworkers and their supporters confronted police outside the church where other strikers were trying to stay out.

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OVERSEAS

Japan police braced for rightist violence

From Peter Hazelhurst
Tokyo, May 6

After fighting Japan's radical left-wing Red Army for almost two decades, the Japanese police have been warned to prepare for a possible violent assault by rightwing nationalists.

Mr Shizuhiko Yamamoto, director general of Japan's National Police Agency, is reported to have told senior officers today that he expects fanatical rightists to organize violent demonstrations later this month when Chairman Huo Guofeng of China is due to arrive on his first official visit to Japan.

Senior officers disclosed today that small but dedicated and disciplined groups of rightists have intensified activity against the Government, since Japan and China signed a treaty of peace and friendship in October, 1978. The actions have included an attempt to assassinate Mr Masayoshi Ohira, the Prime Minister.

Small groups of right-wing militants, led by Aikokuto (the Great Patriots' Party), are campaigning to keep Japan out of the Olympics in protest at the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan.

It was a member of Aikokuto who assassinated in 1960 Inejiro Asanuma, the chairman of the Japan Socialist Party, the country's second-largest political group.

Many of Japan's rightists, who glorify the Emperor and call for rearmament, draw their inspiration from Yukio Mishima, the author, who committed Seppuku (ritual suicide) in November, 1970.

Mishima thrust a sword into his stomach at the Defence Agency's headquarters in Tokyo after failing to persuade members of the armed forces to rise against the Government.

Surinam MPs held after failure of coup

The Hague, May 6.—Several members of Surinam's Parliament were arrested by troops who suppressed a foreign-backed coup last week, according to the country's Prime Minister.

The radio and television announcement by Dr Chin A Sen was the first confirmation from the Surinam Government of the coup attempt, disclosed yesterday by the Dutch Foreign Ministry.

According to the ministry, the insurgents were commanded by Mr Fritz Ormskirk, a Dutchman who had served in the Surinam Army. He was captured and killed after leading mercenaries across the border from French Guiana.

Last night, Dr Chin A Sen said one person was killed and a number of people, including some members of the Surinam Parliament, had been arrested. He did not name them.

The Prime Minister said the army had seized rifles, ammunition and explosives. Those arrested would be tried after investigations had been completed.—Reuter.

Wife injured over 2p

Delhi, May 6.—A man chopped off his wife's nose in a fit of rage when she demanded half a rupee (just over 2p), the police reported at Korker, north of Delhi.

Thousands join Assam resistance

From Kuldip Nayar
Gauhati, Assam, May 6

It is an explosion, a human explosion, not an agitator. Thousands of people, mostly women and students, come into the streets every day to offer *satyagraha* on the lines of Mahatma Gandhi's resistance against the British.

It has gone on for seven months and the demand that unites all the participants is that foreigners should be ousted from their state, Assam.

This time the foreigner is not a white man. He is part of the endless stream of people who have flowed into India from East Bengal. From there it was a province of Pakistan and then when it became Bangladesh.

The Assamese feel that they have become a minority in their own state. This is true. If there were a census today, they would form only 42 per cent of the population.

They argue that they are becoming political orphans in their own state because of the

Specially bred basses extend birds' repertoire

Soviet audiences thrill to sound of canary choir's music

From Michael Binion
Moscow, May 6

For 30 years the citizens of Kharkov have enjoyed concerts of classical music by their local choir, but have had to make do with pieces that did not require a bass voice. The problem was solved only when some of the singers were specially bred to achieve full harmony—an unusual solution, but the choir consists entirely of canaries.

The avian artists have given more than 2,000 performances in local concert halls under their conductor, Fyodor Fomenko, a stage-hand in the Kharkov Puppet Theatre, and more than two million people have enjoyed their warblings.

The tenors and sopranos are

now alighted with excitement that they have been joined by fully-fledged basses. Local ornithologists, who have been trying for years to induce some of the leading soloists to sing the lower parts, have succeeded at last with careful crossing and good breeding, in deepening the vocal range of some of the performers.

The birds have a repertoire of more than 80 works. These include local favourites: Glink's romance "Doubt"; Alrabyev's "Nightingale", and Kabalevsky. Of the foreign classics, they give full-throated renderings of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata"; Schubert's "Serenade", and a series of Strauss waltzes.

Russian folk songs are also a specialty, and from the Ukraine they enjoy singing "A Cossack Went Beyond the Danube", and the aply entitled "I Look at the Sky".

The concerts are often accompanied by violinists and singers, and the volatile group has taken to the air on radio and television. They have even travelled to Moscow to perform at the Exhibition of Economic Achievements.

Their supporters at home include some 700 song-bird lovers who are members of the city's Nature Protection Society. The section chairman, appropriately, is their own trainer and conductor, Fyodor Fomenko.

Indian parties fail to agree on poll pact

From Richard Wigg
Delhi, May 6

The hectic attempts among India's now splintered opposition groups to make an electoral pact for the legislative elections in nine important states later this month have all failed.

None of the groups proved willing to yield even a slim chance of capturing a single seat and Mrs Indira Gandhi's Congress Party will undoubtedly benefit. In several states it will be the younger-generation followers of Mr Sanjay Gandhi, the Prime Minister's younger son, who will benefit most.

In Uttar Pradesh, India's single most influential state in politics, Mr Gandhi has shown a master of the "ticket game"—the caucus room maneuvering to get one's supporters on the party candidates list and those of one's opponents within the party excluded.

But Mr Gandhi's abrasive style of operating and the underlying displacement of many of the older generation in Uttar Pradesh politicians by younger men, often with little political experience, has caused a revolt among those who want Mr Charan Singh to strike some kind of "devil's bargain" with other opposition groups, excluded from the party ticket, and with it lucrative political prospects.

As many as 150 Indira-Congress candidates in the state's 425 constituencies are refusing to withdraw from campaigning. They are now being threatened by expulsion from the party by the state leadership, which is closely identified with Mr Gandhi.

Mr Gandhi's influence, already powerful behind the scenes, although he is still only a Member of Parliament, with no post in the Government, is overtly on the increase.

The Bharatiya Janata party, the one-time Jans Sangh group, the Janata Party, led by Mr A. B. Vajpayee, has put up 377 candidates.

Faced by this stubbornness, two other opposition groups also tried to get together for seat adjustments, but they also failed to make a pact.

Court discharge: Mr Gandhi and 300 others, accused of staging a riot in one of Delhi's principal shopping streets in May, 1979, were today all discharged by a Delhi magistrate.

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The leader of the ousted Khmer Rouge regime said that former President Khieu Samphan of Kampuchea had in

an interview that the dry-season offensive launched by Vietnamese troops in his country had "fallen flat".

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SPORT

Cricket

Cockbain shows highest promise

By John Woodcock
Cricket Correspondent

LORD'S: Middlesex (7 pts) drew with Lancashire (2).

Mark the name of Ian Cockbain. At Lord's yesterday, playing in only his second first-class match, he deprived Middlesex of what had seemed like certain victory by taking from 12.30 until the score was 57 for four, with rain and bad light ended the match in the 45th hour. By then Lancashire, with three wickets left, were 48 runs ahead.

Cockbain is 22, a fair-haired right-hander with an orthodox mind and what would seem to be a certain sort of temperament: he plays golf as well, off a handicap of six. Until joining the staff at Old Trafford two years ago, he played cricket for Bootle in one of the Liverpool competitions. His first Schweppes championship match was Lancashire's last of last season, against Leicestershire, when he batted once and made 23.

This, therefore, was only his third first-class innings, and no sooner had he come to the Hove pitch than he had 55 of Lancashire's score, which was then 88 for five. Middlesex were looking a good, businesslike, side: Daniel had already batted well, and in a high-class spell of seam bowling van der Bijl had given clear evidence of how and why he has become the leading wicket-keeper in South Africa's Currie Cup. Hayes had played very well, but against the de Vills he had needed a good deal of luck.

With no specialist batsmen to keep Cockbain company, the match looked as good as over; but Middlesex batted for 50 minutes before he came in, and Lancashire for an hour before being caught at short leg off Emburey. When Lancashire were seven out, Lancashire were six runs out and there was still two hours 10 minutes left.

Cockbain, though, had already



Appearances can deceive: this good-looking shot by Hayes off Emburey produced his downfall, caught by Gaunt at square leg.

shown that he can bat. He had stood up well to Daniel and displayed good judgment in length and line, and in his second spell with a sound forward defence. For some reason, too, Bream did not bowl van der Bijl between ten minutes to one and five o'clock.

It is a long time since I saw someone with so little experience

as Cockbain play so sensibly against an attack of this calibre and on pitch that was not quite up to the plumbum of the day. It will be disappointing if he fades.

Hayes was the last young English Test batsman to come out of the great nursery at Old Trafford; it is time there was another, and if Cockbain has a lot to prove before

Captain and his lieutenant courageous save Essex

By Peter Marson

ILFORD: Essex (4 pts) drew with Somerset (6).

Few would have given Essex, with their multitude of problems, more than a faint chance of survival at Valentine's Park yesterday. They had gained a slender stand for the third wicket between Hardie and Fletcher, who put on 58 runs in just under five hours, accomplished all that the reigning champions, set 402 runs to win, can have hoped for.

The two played their parts splendidly and it was sad that neither reached the centuries which would have been a fitting reward. Coming together at 44 for two after only a quarter of an hour's play, they batted with great good sense, discipline and attacking force, when the opportunity presented itself.

Hardie hit nine boundaries in 95 before he was taken behind off Botham with the new ball in the second of the last 20 overs. Fletcher, who fell on 95 leg before Marson with 13 overs left, hit 14 fours.

At the start Essex needed 38 runs to win. Their opening pair-nightwatchmen, or call them what you will in these rather abnormal circumstances, were Smith, the wicketkeeper (highest score 126 against Somerset at Leyton in 1976) and the joker in the pack, East (highest score 113, against Hampshire in 1976).

Botham had nine boundaries in 95 before he was taken behind off Botham with the new ball in the second of the last 20 overs.

Fletcher, who fell on 95 leg before Marson with 13 overs left, hit 14 fours.

Botham had another 100 pencilled in the scoreboard.

Then came the four balls of the day from Botham, pinned him out caught and bowled. Botham's catch at shoulder height was a good one, for the ball came at a fair pace and curled away in flight.

The score was 15 in the seventh over and in the tenth over Smith had been taken too, though by this date he had had a thoroughly enjoyable time scoring 24 runs. His hurricane hitting brought five boundaries off eight balls from Botham, and in his last attempt at tempting another big hit, he skied Moseley to the wicketkeeper.

East, no doubt, had another 100

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PARLIAMENT, May 6, 1980

Demonstration of nation's will not to allow terrorist blackmail to succeed

House of Commons

The way in which the incident at the Iranian Embassy in London was conducted and resolved demonstrated conclusively the determination of the British Government to protect people and to stop terrorist blackmail to succeed. Mr William Whitelaw, Home Secretary said in a statement.

Mr Whitelaw, in his statement, said: As the House is aware, this incident was brought to a conclusion yesterday evening following an assault by members of the Special Air Service Regiment. I regret that it proved necessary to resort to the use of force, but there is no alternative.

The terrorists killed two hostages. The outcome of the assault, I believe, speaks for itself. Of the 19 hostages known to be alive when the assault took place all were rescued. Sixteen have already been discharged from hospital and three remain there.

Four gunmen were killed in the assault and another is in police custody; none escaped. There was no police or SAS casualties.

Throughout the five days of the siege, the Metropolitan Police patiently sought to negotiate towards a peaceful conclusion. As a result of their efforts, five hostages were progressively released.

On behalf of the Prime Minister and I, I made clear to the Commissioner that HM Government were not prepared to give in to the terrorists' demands for a safe conduct out of this country.

Subject to that overriding con-

sideration, we did everything in our power to persuade the terrorists peacefully to surrender and free the hostages.

It was the right of that policy that Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Office, sought the assistance of some ambassadors from certain Middle Eastern countries; but help from that source was not forthcoming.

On the Commission's behalf he underlined the approach his officers were taking in a personal message that was delivered into the Iranian Embassy yesterday.

The help of a Muslim Imam was also sought. He spoke personally to the gunmen in an attempt to persuade them not to take action which would be damaging both to their hostages and to themselves.

As yesterday's progress was becoming increasingly clear, however, that the days of patient negotiation and of personal direct appeals were not going to achieve their objectives. From the start of the siege, I made clear that legal steps were met to kill hostages if demands were not met.

As soon as it became clear that they had begun to carry out those threats, I authorised, at the Commissioner's request, the commandos to use all the means at their disposal to end the siege in violence. That is the right approach in this country on such a matter.

The Government was right to make it clear that no government in this country is prepared to offer

safe conduct to those who commit criminal acts. There are lessons to be learned from the last six days, operational and in general.

Now the events are over, given the spread of Middle Eastern

terrorism to the continent, we

will draw Lord Carrington's

attention to the Foreign Secretary (Lord Carrington) to impress on Middle Eastern embassies that

passports should not be given

under any pretext to those who

are not their citizens. They

should be reminded that the

use of arms under diplomatic

protection is an unfriendly act.

In particular, what is going on

in the Libyan Embassy? Are those

working there officially accredited

to this country? What steps are

being taken to end the Foreign

Secretary's threat to Libyan

nationals in this country to

liquidate them unless they return

to their own country?

Steps must be taken to ensure

that it does not happen.

Long may we continue to accept

students from all parts of the

world to our universities and

polytechnics. But why is it

so easy for Iranians to come here

to follow courses which have

sprung up in institutions in differ-

ent parts of the world? We

are all of us known to Asians and

West Indians who wish to come

here to study are forbidden to do

so. It is right that it is

the Iranian who is responsible for

the violence in this country?

Mr Whitelaw—Planning in ad-

vance of such operations has been

conducted by successive governments.

It was very important when it came to the moment of having to carry it through. It deserved tribute. The attitude of the Royal Docks

and the rest of our outstanding trib-

ute to the professionalism and bra-

very of the SAS. (Renewed ap-

plause.)

I am sure the House, and indeed

the country, will wish to join the

Government in thanking all those

who have been involved in this

operation. The Commissioner of

the Royal Docks, Mr Peter Rees,

chief Opposition spokesman on Home Affairs (South, Lab) said:

It was right to take time for

negotiations and discussions

before deciding to act in the way

which we all saw on television last

evening.

The overall operation was well

carried out and shows the merit

of the procedures built up for

operational control at two levels,

ministerially and with the police

and the Royal Docks.

It was right to convey our tribute to the bravery shown by many of

the officers who were taking on the

Iranian Embassy yesterday.

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How can we squeeze more miles out of your gallon?

Shell's laser 'eye' reveals some secrets.



Dr. Martin Swords, Shell Scientist,
Thornton Research Centre.

"One of the biggest problems in engine design is finding out just what's going on inside while the engine's running."

Engineers have long known that the turbulence of the petrol mixture and gases swirling inside the cylinder has an important effect on performance - but the

difficulties of measuring the characteristics of a gas cloud which explodes about every 12 milliseconds, reaches 1500°C and is locked away inside thirty or forty pounds of metal, have proved insurmountable until now.

We are now able to drill holes in an engine cylinder, insert thick quartz windows and punch laser beams through the gas clouds as they mix and burn.

Using this technique we can work out the turbulence and the velocity of the gases.

Engineers and scientists can use this data to improve both the cylinder geometry and the chemistry of the fuels.

Since we estimate that this new information could help to bring about fuel economy improvements as great as twenty per cent, it is a development of some consequence.

If you think of the difference such a saving would mean to you, it's easy to see why we think this work is so important."



Bernard Levin

Charlie Chan and the curse of the super-prigs

There is more to this story than meets the eye, but I shall begin with the bit that is visible, which is that a film company in the United States is about to make a new film about Charlie Chan. Any reader under a certain age will need an explanation at this point, so I had better stop and give it: Charlie Chan was the name of film hero of many years ago, who appeared in an immense series of cinema detective stories and later in a similar television series. (The character was played by a number of actors over the years, but the one I remember from my infancy was Warner Oland.) Charlie Chan the detective who solved all the mysteries, who gave him a quality different from those of most screen policemen was that he was Chinese, and this was not just incidental, but the most important thing about the character, who was always beginning sentences "Confucius he say" and harking his conversation with mock-Chinese exclamation (like a rather less sure Kai Lung). The only other detail I recall with any certainty was that Charlie Chan had a very large family, and I think a more or less grown-up son who helped him in his cases.

The mood of the films was a blend of comedy and mystery-drama; no doubt it would seem clumsy by today's standards (or not, of course, as the case might be), but no one who saw the films will fail to recapture, on



A fiendishly clever detective of yesteryear: Warner Oland (right) with Boris Karloff in the 1936 film Charlie Chan at the Opera.

thinking about them, the affectionate and admiring atmosphere that surrounded the hero: Charlie Chan was always successful in tracking down the villains, and it was clearly implied that this was because he was Chinese and therefore intellectually superior.

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamus in illis, particularly the progeny of a nasty modern breed of censors who are infesting the world, deriding the bystanders and terrorising innocent purveyors of entertainment. A gang of these are at present, it seems, working up a protest against the revival of Charlie Chan (the new film is to be called *Charlie Chan and the Curse of the Dragon Queen*, a title in the same form as that of the originals, which were, as I recall, always "Charlie Chan and . . ."), who is being played this time by Peter Sellers (who made a speedy recovery from his present illness). Already, there are now familiar slogans being provided by Rennobots: "Racist stereotype . . . insult to Chinese . . . Chinese don't talk like that"; there is even a Rennobot body, custom-built, called "Chinese for Affirmative Action" (these things spring up overnight like poisonous toads after rain); and there is, of course, the final threat that there will be "demonstrations" if the film-makers persist in their endeavour (they propose to shoot the film in San Francisco, which

really are people, in this country as well as the United States, who spend their time and lots of other people's money—going about looking for a grievance to have, and indeed encouraging others, who would not normally think of themselves as unkind, to invent and feel grievances of their own. (They are on to a good thing; there are genuine grounds on which minorities, particularly racial ones, have every right to feel aggrieved and to protest against those who have given them cause for complaint. But that does not excuse the grievance-manufacturers.) The worst single example of this I ever encountered directly came in a letter I got, on behalf of a group which included MPs of different political persuasions.

What I was told is that I should not use words like "black" in a metaphorical sense ("a black look", "black-seated", etc), because this was unfair to, and discriminatory of, black people. I told the senders of this impudent missive that it would be a good idea if they could find something useful to do with their time and thus have some left in which to pester me with such stuff, and I heard no more, though since then the efforts of the pests have not only increased, but born

horrible fruit; even children's books are being censored for matter which can, by a vivid use of imagination, multiplied by a good deal of hypocrisy.

about the film, he being in San Francisco to look at possible locations.

Clive and I are very close; we spent the years of our youth discovering music together, which forged an unbreakable bond. It follows therefore that he who wishes to have a reckoning with my cox will also have to take me on; the combination, I must warn those rash enough to try it, is exceptionally formidable.

But of course you don't have to be a friend of the director to find distasteful such an attitude to such a film.

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SPECIAL REPORT

STAMPS

Kenneth Chapman, Philatelic Correspondent, explains the finer points of collecting in this report marking London 1980, the International Stamp Exhibition at Earls Court (May 6-14), which he also reviews on this page

When the unique British Guiana 1856 black-on-magenta stamp was sold at auction in New York last month at a world record price of nearly £44,000 for a single stamp, the public was amazed that a dirty and ugly scrap of paper should be so valuable. Philatelists took the news calmly and carried on with their self-appointed tasks of developing interesting collections of limited scope but of much greater documentary importance than any investment portfolio of rare stamps prepared for a non-philatelist.

Stamp can be an investment, but selective buying is necessary to guarantee a result likely to attract anybody whose interest is in profit and not in the stamps themselves: and, ironically, it is the most dedicated philatelists who create collections that are sound long-term investments although that was not their aim.

Broadly speaking, the hobby is enjoyed by two distinct groups, each containing people of all ages, classes and nationalities. One group consists of stamp collectors and the other of philatelists—and the distinction is clear. The important thing is that both groups enjoy their respective activities, and therein lies the universal appeal of the hobby.

Small boys and girls who acquire stamps from friends or relatives with overseas postal contacts happily mount their new treasures in inexpensive stamp albums and unconsciously absorb general knowledge about the countries from which the stamps come. The growing number of adults who buy all new stamps issued by the British Post Office—on average there are five special sets on various topics as well as the regular Christmas stamps

Edward Stanley Gibbons: from shop corner to £16m a year trade.

curious was developing into the designs of their purchases. They are stamp collectors, all of them untroubled about the technicalities of stamp design and production but some of them may well become philatelists.

It all began soon after the world's first adhesive postage stamps were issued in Britain in 1840. During the 20 years other countries adopted this system of pre-payment for letters and by 1860 stamp collecting was fashionable. In place of albums containing embossed creases cut from the back flaps of envelopes used by titled people, business organisations and various public authorities, many Victorian households filled their albums with stamps cut from the fronts of the envelopes, which they pasted down firmly on the album leaves.

By the mid-1860s, private exchange of these postal

regular dealing by shipping companies, merchants and banks in Liverpool, who salvaged the stamps from mail addressed to their employers. London office boys followed suit and Britain Lane in the City soon became the scene of a regular lunch-hour open-air stamp bourse. These enterprising lads were not first in the field, for a flourishing stamp bourse established the Tuilleries Gardens had led to the first regular stamp shop being opened in Paris a few years earlier. Similar activity was taking place in Brussels and New York.

However, one Englishman had already paved the way. In 1856, 16-year-old Edward Stanley Gibbons, son of a Plymouth pharmacist, persuaded his father to allocate a corner of the shop exclusively for stamp dealing. Today, Stanley Gibbons International, a quoted company with a turnover exceeding £16m annually, employs more than 400 people. Based in London, where young Edward settled in 1874, the firm operates businesses in Britain, Germany, France, Sweden, Australia, South Africa and the United States.

It was a Birmingham stamp dealer, Edward Loines Pemberton, who has been fairly described as the father of scientific philately.

To him, the picture on the stamp (at that time usually the ruling monarch, the arms of the issuing country or just plain numerals) mattered little. He wanted to know how the stamp had been printed, the type of paper used, whether it had a watermark, or any other aspect of production which might enable him to distinguish the genuine from the forged. In 1863 he knew enough to write, and have monographs appear with us

curios was developing into the designs of their purchases. They are stamp collectors, all of them untroubled about the technicalities of stamp design and production but some of them may well become philatelists.

In 1869 a dozen serious collectors formed the Philatelic Society, London. It is now the Royal Philatelic Society and can claim to be the oldest and the most important philatelic organisation in the world. Its spacious headquarters, near Baker Street, house a magnificent library and reference collections.

Advances in philatelic knowledge have inevitably led to specialisation and the formation of large societies whose members are concerned only with the stamps and postal history of a single country. For example, the Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain has more than 700 members who study the classic issues of the former Canadian provinces, and those of the 1867 Confederation onwards. The society publishes its own very professional journal, *Maple Leaves*, and works closely within the British North American Philatelic Society in Canada.

There are well over 500 active local philatelic societies in Britain that meet weekly, fortnightly or monthly to enjoy displays of stamps of all kinds and listen to technical papers on the subject. Most advanced collectors belong to their local society (where members' collecting ranges from modern British issues to those of countries from Afghanistan to Zaire) and to the society which caters for their special interest.

The hobby has generated a remarkable output of literature. Apart from the basic weekly and monthly magazines and the vast output of general textbooks and catalogues, highly specialized and expensive

The open-air stamp market in the Square Marigny, Paris, which dates back to the end of the last century. Photograph: Carlos Freire.

failing regularity. The public may be mystified by the finer points of philately, but the constant press references in editorial and advertising matter to the investment potential of stamps is something it can understand. Prices for some rare stamps have risen dramatically in the past three years, far beyond the natural rises because of inflation. Despite this, extreme caution is advisable before the

continued on facing page

For the first time in its long history as an exhibition centre, Earls Court, London, is the site of an international stamp exhibition—which opens next Tuesday. About 4,000 display frames will contain stamps valued at more than £20m and more than 200 leading stamp dealers from all parts of the world and about 50 overseas post offices will have stands there. It is only once every 10 years that Britain mounts a stamp exhibition of this size and importance.

The exhibits will be in two main classes: invited and competitive. A major *hors-concours* exhibition is the Queen, the patron of the exhibition, whose incomparable collection of British Commonwealth stamps was started and developed by her grandfather, King George V, a keen and skilled philatelist.

The royal collection contains many unique items, and among those on view at Earls Court will be an 1855 watercolour portrait of Queen Victoria, painted by Edward Henry Corbould, which a plaque which was used for designing the stamps. The museum has also prepared a special display, *Carrying British Mail*, tracing the history of mail transport from the mounted post boy of the first Elizabethan era onwards, and showing inward overseas mail services from the nineteenth century packer ships—armed to repel pirates—through to the air-mail network of today.

There has been no advance publicity about the competitive entries which have been arriving from many countries during the past two weeks. Caution required that the assembly of these valuable exhibits should not be publicized until the exhibition was set up and under strict 24-hour security guard at Earls Court.

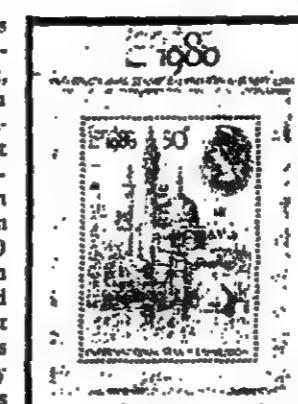
From the opening day, a jury of almost 40 specialists will begin the difficult task of assessing the entries in the 4,000 frames and making awards which will extend from the Grand Prix d'Honneur (in the only class open to most previous gold medal winners at other international exhibitions) down to the hundreds of bronze medals for collectors who will measure these as evidence that their collections were accepted for display in London—1980.

The Grand Prix d'Honneur is a magnificent Wedgwood Jasperware vase donated by the British Post Office. Other Wedgwood pieces will be awarded, respectively, to the best exhibit of British stamps in the national class, and to the best exhibit of any other collection in the international class.

The London 1980 medals (in gold, silver-gilt, silver, silver-bronze and bronze) were produced at the Royal Mint from designs by Peter Windett Associates and show obverse and reverse, the Tower of London and St George and the Dragon.

An international stamp exhibition, wherever held, ignores political divisions. The entries come from all parts of the world and the jury is equally international. At Earls Court the decisions will be taken by jurors

World exhibits worth £20m on display in London



from Britain, the United States, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Turkey, Japan, India, Costa Rica and nearly all the Western European nations, all working under a British chairman.

The British Post Office will have a two-storey stand with 24 counter positions at which a complete philatelic service will be available separate from other counters offering the normal commercial business facilities.

British philatelists, with liberal help from the Post Office, have spent three years preparing for this event. Inflation has pushed up the costs to well over £1m, but skilful management should balance the books of the exhibition which will, once again, show that London remains the world's philatelic capital, as is proper to the city that gave birth, in 1840, to the world's first postage stamp.

Young collectors have not been forgotten. Their special corner will resemble a Victorian country railway station—Little Licking—in which lectures, video-tapes and films about stamp collecting and mail handling will help them to understand their hobby. An exhibition of stamps with railway designs and this year's winning entries in the nationwide Melville junior philatelic processes will be demonstrated.

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كما في الأصل

Stuart Rose discusses approaches to stamp design in Britain and Patrick O'Leary recalls the

William Dockwra post, launched just 300 years ago

Black is beautiful

Since the issue of the first adhesive postage stamp in 1840, it has been the operational function of a stamp rather than its artistic merit that has preoccupied the minds of the Post Office and its suppliers. To them, the postage stamp played an important part in the successful handling and trafficking of mail, being a receipt for the prepayment of a postal service and the only indication to postal staff of what service had been paid for.

Any ambiguity, therefore, in the way in which that information was conveyed could well put at risk the efficiency of the service. Even the Penny Black, arguably the most beautiful stamp Britain produced, was designed first as an efficient tool in mail handling and only incidentally did it eventually turn out to be a product of such beauty.

Yet in spite of the strictures it laid upon itself, the Post Office has always recognized its own responsibility to the public to issue stamps with as much artistic merit as possible; and, within the stylistic limits of period and taste it has set and maintained a remarkably high standard of design.

Never claiming any professional competence in such matters of artistic expression, it has always sought outside professional advice; following the example set by Rowland Hill who consulted three Royal Academicians on the design of his first Penny Black.

possibly because no other advice was available, the Post Office tended to look towards artists, rather than designers, for help and encouraged the belief that stamp design had everything to do with art—a fallacy which persists even in some quarters today. It was, however, the creation of the Council of Industrial Design in 1946 and the subsequent formation of its own Stamp Advisory Panel that saw the new profession of designers becoming involved not only



as practitioners, but in the activities of selection and adjudication which the panel performed.

It was not until 1968, however, that the Post Office took a major step towards complete involvement in professional design by creating the post of design director and fitting it with a professional designer. For many years it had been an enlightened patron of design, commissioning freelance designers to work mainly on publicity material. But it had never seriously considered employing professional designers on its own staff.

At the same time as the creation of this new design post, a new Stamp Advisory Committee was established, to be administered by the Post Office under the chairmanship of its director of operations and overseas. With the new committee, however, the fact that it was under Post Office control made possible for the first time a much closer

relationship between itself and the designer in the first place, then progressively between the designer and the printer; so recreating the classic pattern of professional design direction involving in one coordinated operation the client, the designer and the manufacturer. The coincidence of these two changes in design control was to make possible a new approach to stamp design and heralded the golden years of British stamp design.

The success of this new policy is seen in the stamp that derived from it, and it was recognized in 1973 by a Design Council Award for the previous year's stamp programme together with the supporting promotional print of first-day covers and presentation packs. That the Design Council, whose standards are high and demanding, should have made this award was praise enough, but that it should have been made for the design excellence of the



stamps rather than their philatelic worth was complete justification of Post Office attitudes and beliefs.

As with all industrial design, however good a designer may be, the product of his skill will be as good as his client will allow it to be. In the case of stamps, client influence takes two interdependent forms, the choice of subject and the manner in which the Post Office believes it should be expressed.

Every year the Postal Marketing Department will receive about two hundred requests from outside sources for an issue of Commonwealth Games in 1970. Both, in their own way, are competent designs but so different in concept as to suggest two opposite points of Post Office view.

There is an inherent danger in a pictorial stamp that too much insistence on realism will rob it of any graphic treatment which it believes will increase philatelic sales.

With only five or six places to fill in a year's programme, the problem of maintaining a proper balance between subjects without causing too much offence is a delicate one. In addition, it is of fundamental importance that, given an equal choice, only subjects which are capable of a good design solution should be included for not all subjects, however worthy, in themselves, will necessarily make a worthy stamp.

But the decision that will have the greatest effect on the ultimate stamp is the 3d Coronation in 1953, David Gentleman's Churchill in 1965 and his three castles in the Investiture issue of 1976; Andrew Restall's Commonwealth Games of 1970 and Seafaring in 1975; Britons of 1974; Peter Murdoch's EEC of 1973; and Geoffrey Matthews's Coronation Anniversary of 1978.

However susceptible a subject may be to a good design solution, and however good the designer may be, the ultimate quality of design will depend entirely on the standards of design held by the Post Office and its professional ability and willingness to uphold them; without that even the best of designers can be of little help.

It is an interesting comparison that can be made between two cycling stamps, one by Fritz Wegner in 1978 and one by Andrew Restall for the Commonwealth Games in 1970. Both, in their own way, are competent designs

but so different in concept as to suggest two opposite points of Post Office view.

There is an inherent danger in a pictorial stamp that too much insistence on realism will rob it of any graphic treatment which it believes will increase philatelic sales.

With today's wide range of subjects such an attitude is hardly practical, but at least the dominant element should be a well-controlled graphic design expression of the subject, not just an illustration. Without making it invidious, comparisons

of stamps which have met this condition have been Dulac's 3d Coronation in 1953, David Gentleman's Churchill in 1965 and his three castles in the Investiture issue of 1976; Andrew Restall's Commonwealth Games of 1970 and Seafaring in 1975; Britons of 1974; Peter Murdoch's EEC of 1973; and Geoffrey Matthews's Coronation Anniversary of 1978.

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Finer points of collecting

continued from facing page

non-philatelist takes the plunge. The value of stamps, like that of pictures and antique furniture, is subject to the vagaries of the market and the dictates of fashion. The high values of the British early George V—known as the "Seahorses"—issue—have slumped by a good 50 per cent in the past six months. Against this, fine used British Commonwealth stamps of 1850-1880, especially when still on the original envelopes, have been in steady demand as the demand for historic postal history has developed.

The non-philatelist is well advised to consult an independent expert before investing in material he does not understand. The aim is to buy ready rare stamps, perhaps at £1,000 or more, rather than those which are always available on the market, but it takes courage and knowledge to do this.

The airmailist is pains-takingly to build up a specialized one-country collection containing not only the basic stamps but all the varieties of shade, perforation and watermark that may exist. Add to this some of the printing varieties and errors, and, finally, demonstrate the postal history of the country concerned. The perfectly balanced collection then becomes a really worthwhile holding—whatever country is involved.

Above all, it is the international appeal of the hobby that provides a worldwide market for a good collection, thus ensuring that philately will last even if stamps themselves fail to survive this age of mechanization.

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Penny post turned upside down

Just 300 years ago Londoners read that they could now enjoy the benefit of a new post with fast delivery of letters and small packages within the capital and its immediate suburbs. The leaflet announcing the service was headed *A Penny Well Bestowed*.

It boasted that lawyers and their clients would be able to correspond more quickly, visitors to London on business or pleasure could tell their friends they had arrived, and the penny post would enable "sick patients frequently to correspond with their doctors and apothecaries", as well as "mentioning much time saved in solicitations for moneys". Schoolboys may have questioned the desirability of another suggested boon: "Parents may converse with their absent children at boarding schools, and children with their parents to the improvement of their hands, stile and learning".

The leaflet declared that shopkeepers, merchants and craftsmen would no longer have to waste their time, or that of their staff, taking

messages to and fro. Even Whig magistrates were willing to circumvent royal control of information, and wished to circulate their own propaganda.

According to Thomas De Launay in *The Present State of London*, published in 1681, the penny post established seven sorting offices throughout London with headquarters at Dockwra's house in Lime Street. Letters could be left at between 400 and 500 receiving-houses, usually shops or coffee houses. Although the penny covered only London delivery, letters could be taken to the General Post Office for sending to other towns through the ordinary mail, while some were passed to watermen serving addresses along the Thames.

Whatever their relationship, Murray soon turned to other activities, and Dockwra became identified with the service. The controversy, and the circumstances which made this a time for innovation, were graphically described by Mr T. Todd in his fully-documented book, *William Dockwra and the Rest of the London Undertakers*.

By the late seventeenth century London, with half a million inhabitants, about 500 streets, miles of waterfront, and growing export/import markets, needed an efficient public service. The post had begun life as the royal mail, carrying messages to and from the monarch and his officials.

In 1680 it was a monopoly whose profits went to the Duke of York, later James II. Some of the money is said to have been spent on the Secret Service. The court was nervous that private letters might be used to spread sedition at a time when rumours were ripe of plots against the monarch; restored after the Commonwealth, or to reinstate the Catholic religion.

Officials at London's General Letter Office used a special garter to open letters and reseal them unknown to recipients. This was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666, which may be why the mob decided the fire was a Popish plot.

Royal suspicion and ministerial inertia combined to thwart various proposals for a quick cheap post. These had the backing of increasingly prosperous and vociferous merchants, who did not want their confidential letters delayed or

copied by snoops. But by 1680 a Whig Parliament and Whig magistrates were willing to circumvent royal control of information, and wished to circulate their own propaganda.

Normal service would be resumed after the proceedings, the undertakers promising. But although Dockwra got off with a fine, the independent penny post was at an end.

Proof that his initiative was valuable came two or three weeks later, when the Postmaster General started his own metropolitan penny post.

To emphasize the change of management, Dockwra's triangular stamps

were turned upside down, while the time stamps became circular instead of heart-shaped.

Naturally, complaints against the service increased once it was government-run.

Attempts were also made to continue unofficial deliveries. Dockwra, who managed to get a government pension for his allegedly illegal services to the mail, was recalled to take charge of the Penny Post Office from 1697 to 1700.

He is also credited with having provided advice in the establishment of postal services in America. He died, at an age variously put at 94 and nearly 100, in 1716.



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§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

Can the Co-op
become more
business-like?
Page 29

■ Stock markets
FT Ind 444.9 up 1.3
FT Gils 68.25 up 0.55
■ Sterling
52.2800 up 2.45 cents
Index 73.2 unchanged
■ Dollar
Index 85.8 down 1.4
■ Gold
\$312.50 unchanged
■ Money
3-month sterling 164 to 17
3-month Euro \$ 123 to 127
6-month Euro \$ 114 to 117

IN BRIEF

£240,000 paid to Sir Fred Pontin by Coral

A £240,000 golden handshake was paid to Sir Fred Pontin by Coral Leisure Group which took over his holiday company two years ago. The group's annual accounts show Sir Fred, who is 73, net £20,000 a year ago.

The company's auditors qualified the accounts because they had no access to certain subsidiary financial records which are held by the Metropolitan Police after last year's raids on Coral's four West End casinos.

Financial News, page 30.

No comment on steel

A European Economic Community spokesman has reiterated the EEC Commission's condemnation of the anti-dumping suit filed by United States Steel Corporation against European steelmakers, but said he could not comment further on the Trade Commissioner's preliminary finding that the suit was justified.

£2m Bombay mill

Dave Atkinsons Indus has won a £2m order to build an aluminium strip mill at Taleig, north of Bombay. It will be designed by Loewy Robertson, another member of the Dreyfus Corporation, for Indias Alumina, part of Alcan Group.

Dollar down in Europe

The latest round of cuts in United States interest rates depressed the dollar throughout Europe yesterday. Its effective index fell by 1.4 percentage points to 85.8 per cent of its December 1971 level. Sterling rose by 2.45 cents to 52.28.

Opec agreement near

Ministers from member states of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries meeting in Saudi Arabia today for an extraordinary conference are confident they are within sight of agreement on a plan which would stabilise oil prices and protect long-term interests of the oil exporters.

Gatt priority

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Gatt) said in its 1979 annual report that top priority was being placed on the implementation of the Tokyo round agreements concluded last November.

Five job losses

Nairn Fibres, the five limited company, has dismissed 100 workers because of a drop in United Kingdom trade and plant conversion problems. The redundancies bring the area's job losses to over 2,000 in 12 months.

Glass sales dip

Sales of British-made glass containers fell slightly last year partly because of the road haulage strike. However, soft drink bottle sales rose by 4.5 per cent. Experts fell by 12 per cent but home sales increased by 0.3 per cent.

PRICE CHANGES

Rises
Antifreeze 1p to 6p
Boozersin 1p to 5p
Feeder 1p to 3p
Graham Hse 10p to 15p
Hawkins 1p to 14p

Falls

Amal Tu-Migra 1p to 15p
Bent & Hiltzak 1p to 50p
Bent Bouton 1p to 17p
Guthrie Corp 1p to 75p
Marshall Univ 1p to 4p

THE POUND

Bank buys	Bank sells
Australia \$ 2.11	2.04
Austria Sch 30.50	28.75
Belgium Fr 63.75	65.00
Canada \$ 1.14	1.07
Denmark Kr 13.20	12.65
Finland Mark 8.86	8.46
France Fr 9.50	9.40
Germany DM 4.24	4.02
Greece Dr 27.00	22.00
Hongkong \$ 11.40	10.95
Iceland Fr 1.14	1.10
Ireland Pd 195.00	189.00
Italy Lira 589.00	534.00
Malta L 5.43	4.46
Monaco Gld 4.63	4.46

April wholesale price index gives hint of easing inflation

By David Blake
Economics Editor

Factory gate prices rose by 1.6 per cent in April, keeping the annual rate of increase in wholesale prices at the 1.9 per cent level recorded in March.

But the prices which industry has to pay for its fuel and raw materials rose by only 0.6 per cent, pointing to an easing of cost pressures later in the year.

This could enable industry to restore some of the profit margins which have been heavily eroded in recent months and may lead to an easing of inflationary pressures towards the end of this year, although the signs are that prices will go on rising rapidly well into 1981.

The wholesale price index covering manufacturing industry went up in April to 197.1 from a revised March level of 194.4. About half of this increase was due to higher government duties on drink and tobacco and the increase for which industry itself was responsible was only about 0.7 per cent.

The Government was also responsible for much of the increase in the costs which industry has to pay. Higher prices for electricity and gas, resulting from the Government's insistence on state-owned industries meeting financial targets, pushed up the index for coal, gas and electricity by 9.4 per cent.

This was more than enough to undo the beneficial effect of a 4 per cent drop in the price of raw materials bought

by manufacturing industries other than food, drink and tobacco.

During April the cost of raw materials was held down by the strength of sterling. Many of the raw materials used by industry are imported at prices quoted in foreign currencies, so the higher the pound stands, the less industry has to pay.

The Government is hoping that this and a general easing in world commodity prices will take the inflationary pressure off next year. But movements in wage costs are likely to be of key importance and there is a sign of a slowdown in these yet.

They have been rising relatively rapidly over the past six months, although government economists point out that manufacturing industry, which is exposed to international competition, has been negotiating smaller pay settlements than the service sector.

Wage cost account for about 70 per cent of price movements for the economy as a whole, so their impact is considerably greater than is the impact of raw material and fuel prices.

But the cost of raw materials which has pushed up prices sharply in the past few months ought to start working to lower the inflation rate from now on. The onset of the world recession is leading to a drop in all commodity prices and this is reinforcing the effects of the strong pound.

Table, page 25

British Shipbuilders' new chairman will take £7,000 pay cut

By Peter Hill
Industrial Editor

Mr Robert Atkinsons has been appointed chairman of British Shipbuilders and will take up the post at the beginning of July.

The Government said Mr Atkinsons who succeeds Admiral Sir Anthony Griffin, He will take a £7,000 cut in his present salary as chairman of Aurora Holdings, to take on the £44,000-a-year chairmanship for three-and-a-half years.

He has resigned from 26 other directorships but will remain part-time chairman of Aurora, the Sheffield-based steelmaking and engineering group, in order to preserve his pension rights.

Mr Atkinson, has been with Aurora for the past eight years and has played a major role in the rationalisation of the special steels industry. He said that, unlike Mr Ian MacGregor who was appointed chairman of the British Steel Corporation last week, he would be joining BS "on a free transfer".

"As far as I am concerned, I am and always have been an intensely patriotic person. I have always said, and always will say, I will serve my country wherever and whenever required", he said.

Mr Atkinson will temporarily take over the post of chief executive which will become vacant shortly when Mr Michael Casey, a former civil servant resigns. However, he said he would be looking for a chief executive from within the industry.

Asked about the industry's present problems and the rundown of the merchant shipbuilding labour force he said: "I think that there are too many men making too few ships."

"We have to get more ships or reduce the number of men, and if you want job security it must be related to financial performance and productivity."

Mr Atkinson said he would work towards developing a lean and efficient shipbuilding industry with improved levels of productivity and delivery performance. Yards would be accorded considerable autonomy

New chief's aims, page 26

in their operations but financial functions would be centralized.

Mr Atkinson is no stranger to the industry. Twenty years ago he was managing director of Duxford Engines, scheduled to be closed by BS, and was managing director of Hanworth Engineering, a major marine equipment supplier.

Asked about the industry's present problems and the rundown of the merchant shipbuilding labour force he said: "I think that there are too many men making too few ships."

"We have to get more ships or reduce the number of men, and if you want job security it must be related to financial performance and productivity."

New chief's aims, page 26

Ex-Bank governor says doubts are arising about membership

Italy's retiring 'CBI' chief wants EMS change

Signor Guido Carli: will remain faithful to vision



NEB's Ferranti disposal nears completion as tension on the board's new role mounts

By Peter Hill
Industrial Editor

Preparations for the National Enterprise Board's disposal of its 50 per cent stake in Ferranti are expected to be completed by the end of next month.

Sir John King, deputy chairman of the NEB, said yesterday that progress on the disposal of Ferranti to the private sector was important in the examination of the board's portfolio of investments made necessary by the Government's change of role for the NEB.

The board has already disposed of its interest in ICL for £37m and more recently reached agreement for the sale of its 100 per cent interest in Fairey Holdings. These disposals were originally linked to the Government's request that the board realized £100m from disposals in the last financial year, although the deadline was

means of supporting its new projects during their start up and loss making years.

"We attach importance to having a proper commercial target, both for our own internal purposes and also as an objective test of our performance."

Discussions on a new financial duty to reflect the changing portfolio will take place shortly in view of the imminent enactment of the Industry Bill which is now before Parliament.

The continued absence of a decision on the future relationship between BL and the board is another source of concern.

Sir Arthur reaffirmed in the NEB report his belief that responsibility for BL should be transferred to the Department of Industry.

"The magnitude of BL, its problems and its financial requirements means that Government must inevitably be closely involved in its major decisions, thus leaving for the NEB only a relatively minor intermediary role. We would gain nothing of substance by having this illusory responsibility." That view was endorsed by Sir John, depuitizing for Sir Arthur at a press conference yesterday.

The NEB is frustrated by the lack of a decision from Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, on granting a further £25m to Immos, the NEB-backed semiconductor company.

Discussions have been complicated by GEC's interest in taking a part or total stake in Immos. GEC has received detailed information on Immos from the NEB which now awaits a reply.

Sir Arthur said: "This is a worrying delay to a project where success depends on bringing satisfactory products to the market at the right time in the face of strong foreign competition."

Financial Editor, page 29



Sir John King: Ferranti disposal important in changing the NEB's portfolio.

to secure a rate of return of between 15 and 20 per cent on capital employed. Last year the NEB made a pre-tax profit of £6.5m (excluding interests in Rolls-Royce and BL), before adverse extraordinary items of £17.2m lowered the return to only 4.8 per cent.

Sir Arthur, said in the NEB's annual report, published yesterday: "The present form of financial duty laid down by Government can only make sense if the NEB maintains profitable investments as a

material costs are again rising strongly. Earlier this year, for example, cement makers introduced a controversial 24 per cent price rise. Overall, building material costs are moving towards an annual inflation rate of about 20 per cent.

During the past 12 months,

the builders have made strong representations to the materials suppliers on the damage that

will be caused to the industry if material price increases are not constrained to meet new market pressures.

The NFETB has set up a Building Materials Advisory Group, including buyers from member companies, to offer advice on materials supply.

The report welcomes the Government's "honest and forthright approach" towards the underlying problems of inflation, incentives and enterprise.

At the same time, there are indications that labour and raw

material costs are again rising strongly. Earlier this year, for example, cement makers introduced a controversial 24 per cent price rise. Overall, building material costs are moving towards an annual inflation rate of about 20 per cent.

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will be caused to the industry if material price increases are not constrained to meet new market pressures.

Meanwhile, the latest state-of-trade inquiry by the NFETB confirms the downward trend in new orders highlighted at the end of last year.

About 50 per cent of the 600 companies canvassed reported fewer inquiries for new work.

Less than one-fifth reported re-

ceiving more. The most buoyant sector was repair and main-

tenance, which now accounts for 36 per cent of all con-

struction output.

The NFETB calls the outlook

for the coming year gloomy,

although it adds that the in-

dustry looks surprisingly re-

The Charterhouse Group 1979

Mr Nigel Mobbs reports

In my statement last year I forecast that profits for 1979 would be little changed. In fact, the year on year improvement at the pre-tax level, excluding the bank, is just under 10%. The improvement in attributable profit includes the benefit of higher oil revenues, improved profits from Charterhouse Japet, lower profit attributable to minority interests and a considerably reduced tax charge.

The attributable profit after taxation of £8,824,000 for the year ended 31st December 1979 showed an increase of 37% over that for the comparable twelve months of 1978, and earnings per share increased by 34.8%.

Dividend

The Directors are recommending a final dividend of 2.5 pence per share, which when aggregated with the interim payment, amounts to 4.1 pence per share - an effective annual increase of 11.1%.

Results in brief	£ million	1979	*1978	1978
		12	12	15
		months	months	months
Profit before interest (excluding the bank)	186	15.6	18.7	
Profit before taxation (excluding the bank)	103	9.4	11.4	
Profit of the bank after tax and transfer to inner reserve	1.4	0.8	0.9	
Attributable group profit after taxation	88	6.4	7.8	
Earnings per ordinary share (pence)	9.25	6.86	8.276	
Dividends per ordinary share (pence)	4.10	3.69	4.613	

*Unaudited figures for the 12 months ended 31st December 1978

The main features of the year's results are:

- Very satisfactory improvements in results from both the banking and development capital activities.
- A continued strong performance by Spring Grove provided the basis during the latter part of the year for a very successful flotation by way of tender offer to the Group's shareholders and 60% of the issued capital of this company is now in the hands of the public. More than £10 million was raised, so strengthening the Group's balance sheet, improving its gearing and providing resources for new investment. The flotation in 1979 is the culmination of a long and successful relationship and is a good example of the Charterhouse philosophy of helping companies grow to a stage where they are large and strong enough to become independent.
- The first substantial contribution from the Group's investment in the Thistle Field; Charterhouse Petroleum Development, which early in the year increased its stake in the Thistle Field to 2.3%, produced profits of £3.4 million compared with a figure of only £655,000 in the previous year. Future prospects appear to be excellent.
- A strong recovery by Charcon Products, although this was partially offset by a substantial reduction in the contribution from Newage Engineers, which suffered from lower demand in its international markets.
- Glanvill Enthoven was affected by increased international competition in insurance broking, over-capacity in the market and the high value of sterling.

Future prospects

The Group is now a broadly based investment and banking group, offering a wide range of financial and equity support to commerce and industry. As an investment and banking group, Charterhouse will continue to assist the prosperous development of small to medium sized businesses and its financial resources will continue to be re-invested in new opportunities.

The Group is increasing its spread of investments and financial activities and, subject to no unforeseen circumstances, looks forward to a better year for profits, which should again be materially assisted by increased oil revenues, even though such profits are more highly taxed than other profits.

NIGEL MOBBS, Chairman



The Charterhouse Group is an investment and banking group listed on the Stock Exchange, London, with shareholders' funds of £70 million and total capital employed of £105 million. More than 50% of profits arise from exports and overseas earnings.

The Group's strategy is to invest in businesses with the object of improving their profitability and future prospects. Many of the subsidiaries of Charterhouse have been developed from small beginnings and are now successful and mature enterprises. Opportunities to enhance the further development of these companies by the allocation of additional resources or by the introduction of additional partners or shareholders, or by flotation if appropriate, are always under active consideration.

Charterhouse aims to achieve a balanced investment portfolio, earning an improving return on capital in which risk and capital requirements are balanced, so limiting exposure in individual market sectors, companies and geographical locations.

Copies of the Annual Report of The Charterhouse Group Limited are obtainable from: Group Communications Department, The Charterhouse Group Limited, 1 Paternoster Row, St. Pauls, London EC4M 7DH. Telephone 01-248 3999.

British Shipbuilders' new chairman spells out his objectives for reviving the state corporation

Mr Robert Atkinson, British Shipbuilders' new chairman, has not lost any time in spelling out his objectives for his three and a half year stint at the loss-making state shipbuilding corporation.

Mr Atkinson, small and quietly spoken, like Mr Ian MacGregor, his recently appointed but infinitely more controversial state industry colleague at the British Steel Corporation, fits perfectly the specification laid down by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, to carry through Government industrial policies in the nationalised sector.

A successful private sector businessman with some merchant banking experience (he was with Keyser Ullman for three years) and above all with knowledge of the industry, Mr Atkinson takes over at BS as full time chairman and chief executive on July 1.

The tasks he faces are considerable in an industry desperately attempting to weather the storm of an international shipbuilding recession and seeking to become competitive within tightly drawn Government cash limits.

BS lost £100m last year and some prompt and effective action will be needed if the corporation is to secure ministerial support and more cash beyond the present deadline of the middle of next year. Mr Atkinson joins BS at a time when Whitehall is already well advanced with preparatory work for the eventual "privatisation" of the industry - a policy which he strongly supports.

The chairman designate yesterday emphasized his faith in the future of shipbuilding and left no doubt that he would pursue the objectives of establishing a strong and viable industry. That is nothing new as

an objective and as he frankly admitted every shipbuilding industry in the world was subsidised to some degree.

But Mr Atkinson looks set to take the pruning shears to the corporation, pretty quickly. Surplus land and buildings will be a priority area for his attention as a means of reducing capital employed and the consequential interest burden.

"I would rather sell off pieces

of land and building than face a man and make him redundant," he explained.

Mr Atkinson was suitably conciliatory towards the industry's unions who already are rumbling ominously over the Government's plans to introduce privatisation.

The new chairman is anxious to build on the improved industrial relations climate by extending to the state sector the cooperation and mutual understanding which has stood him

in good stead during a lifetime in private industry.

Mr Atkinson has left ministers in no doubt that if he is to succeed he must be given a free hand and a period of stability if the Government's objectives and his own for achieving a better financial performance are to be realized.

One of the key elements will be to develop closer links between the shipbuilding industry and British shipowners. The volume of orders placed by foreign shipowners over the years has always been a sore point, and Mr Atkinson should not underestimate the difficulties of ensuring a bigger share for BS.

As he understands it too well, that will only be achieved over a period of sustained levels of quality and prompt delivery.

Peter Hill



Mr Robert Atkinson, new chairman of British Shipbuilders.

By Michael Baily
Transport Correspondent

The Government is being pressed by the Road Haulage Association to take a tough stand against secondary picketing. Mr John Silbermann, the RHA chairman disclosed last night.

Hauliers have been badly hit by recent major disputes in other industries, and the steel strike alone caused three months' idleness for 10,000 lorries (a capital investment of £200m) and their drivers, permanent loss of customers, and threats of victimisation from steel unions afterwards, he told Mr Norman Fowler, the Minister of Transport, and other guests at the association's annual dinner in London.

"The Government is making progress, but it seems to many that this progress is slow," he said. "It appears to lack action and falls short of the promises in its pre-election manifesto.

"Historically, trade union power has grown and such power still flourishes largely unabated. Secondary picketing is perhaps the most crucial area of trade union reform, and is certainly the area most

urgently awaited by the road haulage industry."

Mr Fowler said the Government was determined to achieve a fair legal framework to prevent a series of widespread disruptions of industry which occurred in 1979 under the Labour Government's industrial relations legislation. The Employment Bill now before Parliament contained provisions which would certainly have made unlawful the secondary picketing seen in the recent steel dispute.

The Government totally rejected any direction of freight from road to rail, Mr Fowler said. It was not the Government's job to decide how the customer should send his goods; it was the consumer himself who was in the best position to choose between transport modes. Direction of freight could only deny that decision and add a new bureaucracy to replace the choice of customer.

Business appointments

Vickers names director

Mr Tom Gaugh has been made managing director, Vickers Limited Defence Systems Division, Elswick Works, Newcastle upon Tyne. He takes over from Mr Peter Crowther who remains as chairman of Vickers Defence Systems and is also a member of Vickers Limited Engineering Group board and chairman of Elswick Works local board.

The Civil Aviation Authority has appointed Mr H. A. C. Thompson to the post of chief surveyor, Airworthiness Division.

He succeeds Mr David Guittard who retires at the end of June.

Mr Douglas Dunn becomes managing director of Phoskey Semiconductors.

Mr Jon H. Chaplin is now joint secretary of the General Electric Company (GEC).

Mr Peter Frister has been appointed by James Clark & Eaton as divisional director with the special responsibility of a group marketing director.

Mr E. Peter Gush, president and chief executive officer of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Co, replaces Mr H. R. Fraser as chairman. Mr Gush will continue to be president and chief executive officer. Two new directors on the board are Mr J. Neil Clarke and Mr Vernon Van Sant, Jr.

The new package will have its first reading later this week. The basis of the plan is formed by tax increases of 5,000m kroner (£400m) from pension funds and insurance companies into investment capital for industry has been shelved, pending the findings of a special government commission set up to study the feasibility of such a scheme.

According to Ministry of Finance calculations, the new package is expected to stabilize Denmark's balance of payments deficit at about 16,000m kroner (£1,250m) this year, reducing it to 12,400m kroner (£1,000m) in 1981, and gradually over the subsequent years achieving balance by the end of the decade.

Although Mr Joergensen insists that his belated "Easter egg", as the package is nicknamed, will be sufficient for 1980 and 1981, experts fear that further drastic economies may be necessary during this time.

Mr Erik Hoffmeyer, the governor of the National Bank, has criticized the "Easter egg" as not sufficiently drastic to prevent a further deterioration in the balance of payments.

Economic experts are already predicting the need for another strong dose of economic medicine for Denmark in the Autumn.

Mr Joergensen's seven-month Social Democratic minority Government finally won the support of three small centrist parties after negotiating since Easter. The parties are the Christian People's, the Centre Democrats and Radical Liberals.

Denmark discloses content of £1,000m economic crisis Bill

From Christopher Follett Copenhagen

Mr Anker Joergensen, the Danish Prime Minister, yesterday elaborated on a new 20-30, 13,000m kroner (about £1,000m) economic crisis Bill in the Folketing (parliament) the Folketing (parliament).

The Bill is aimed at cutting consumption, restricting unemployment, improving exports and reducing the Danish balance of payments deficit which last year reached 15,600m kroner (about £1,200m) and is still rising.

The new package will have its first reading later this week. The basis of the plan is formed by tax increases of 5,000m kroner (£400m) and public spending cuts of 8,000m kroner (£650m). State revenue of 5,500m kroner (£450m), will be used to help Denmark's ailing export industries and check unemployment, which is at a record 6 per cent.

The new taxes involve hefty increases on electricity, fuel oil and petrol. Value Added Tax, which is now at 20 per cent in Denmark, is to be raised to an undifferentiated 22 per cent. The rise will become effective July 1.

Compensation to protect old aged pensioners from the worst effects of the price rises are included in the package. Plans to impose a temporary state tax on property, increase road taxes on cars, and perform means-tests for pensions, have been dropped.

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